

# ANNUAL REPORT

2024-2025



# NUESTRA COMUNIDAD



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# SALUDOS DE CLAUDIA

**Dear Friends,**

This year reminded us of the strength, hope, and resilience that define our community. Through every workshop, program, and connection, we saw what becomes possible when people show up for one another. Together, we expanded access to education and opportunity and strengthened the bonds that help our community thrive. I am deeply grateful for everyone who made this year a true reflection of our collective strength.

**As we celebrate our 20th anniversary, my heart is full. This year, we walked alongside more than 3,000 community members, opening doors to education, opportunity, and essential resources that help families move forward with confidence.**

The following pages are a tribute to you, our community. To our English learners taking brave steps toward new beginnings, to our youth dreaming boldly, to our entrepreneurs pursuing their dreams, to our children growing in afterschool programs, and to our new moms finding support and sisterhood, thank you. Your trust and your stories move us, inspire us, and guide our mission every day.

As you read this report, I hope you feel the same pride we feel. I hope you see the lives uplifted, the possibilities created, and the futures reshaped. And I hope you join us in imagining what the next 20 years can be as we continue walking beside our community and transforming lives together.

With gratitude,



A stylized, handwritten signature in black ink, consisting of several fluid, overlapping strokes.

**Claudia Caballero**  
President and CEO  
Centro Hispano de East Tennessee





## BOARD OF DIRECTORS 2024 - 2025

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Cherokee Health Systems



# A YEAR OF ACTION AND IMPACT

## 2024-2025

**For 20 years, Centro Hispano de East Tennessee has walked alongside Latino families** as they build their lives, their futures, and their sense of belonging in our region.

This year, Centro Hispano continued to be a trusted place where Latino families could learn, connect, and access the support they need. **Here is a look at the impact our community made possible.**

**3,313**



**Community members** served across programs, services, and events.

**5,000+**



**Hours of one-on-one support** navigating education, workforce, and social services.

**5,833**



**Volunteer service hours** contributed by **203** dedicated volunteers.

**3M**



**Raised through grants and generous donor support.**

# CELEBRATING 20 YEARS OF STRENGTH, CULTURE, AND COMMUNITY IMPACT

Centro Hispano de East Tennessee is a hub where Latino families learn, grow, and thrive. Our culturally grounded programs support people of all ages through education, connection, and opportunity.

Through this work we elevate the presence, contributions, and voices of Latino families.

**At the heart of our mission is a truth we carry every day: when one of us succeeds, we all succeed.**

## MISSION AND VISION

As the region's leading Latino-serving organization, Centro Hispano de East Tennessee connects, celebrates, and lifts up our community, and we envision an East Tennessee in which all Latinos can thrive culturally, educationally, and economically.

Our mission is to promote empowerment and civic participation through education, workforce development, youth and family engagement, and community-strengthening initiatives.

## OUR VALUES



### *Latinidad*

**We honor and celebrate the richness of Latino culture, identity, and heritage.** Our programs reflect the diversity, pride, and resilience of our community.



### *Comunidad*

**We believe in the power of connection.** Centro Hispano is a place where people come together to learn, feel supported, and build a stronger future as one community.



### *Corazón*

**Heart guides our work.** We lead with compassion, integrity, and genuine care for the families we serve, knowing that every act of service has the power to open new possibilities.



*Our areas of impact*

## THE WORK THAT MOVES OUR COMMUNITY FORWARD

Centro Hispano strengthens our community by delivering essential resources, uplifting youth and families, and expanding workforce opportunities. Together, these areas of impact create the foundation for opportunity, belonging, and long-term success for Latino families across our East Tennessee.

## COMMUNITY RESOURCES

Our Community Resources team helps our community access the services they need, including legal support, health care, and safe housing. We focus on building a healthier and more resilient community by strengthening connections, expanding access, and promoting equity.

### LEGAL SUPPORT

In response to rising concerns about discriminatory national policies, Centro Hispano strengthened its legal support services in late 2024 and early 2025 by expanding access to trusted information, offering nine legal clinics, and providing “Know Your Rights” and family preparedness workshops that helped families safeguard their future.

### Our Impact

- **93** families supported in creating Power of Attorney documents, giving them a clear plan in case of unexpected emergencies.
- **9** workshops hosted to help families understand their rights and access trusted legal resources.



## MATERNAL HEALTH

The Maternal Health program supports new and expecting parents as they prepare for childbirth, navigate postpartum challenges, and build strong, informed caregiving practices.

### Our Impact

- **133** new and expecting parents attended maternal health workshops to educate themselves, find support, and strengthen their networks.
- **34** caregivers enrolled in our **Cuna Program** class series, focused on prenatal, postnatal, and infant care.
- **12** postpartum sessions offered guidance and education for mothers navigating the first days of motherhood.



In 2024-2025 Centro Hispano saw a **136% increase** in program participants.

## COMMUNITY WELLNESS

In East Tennessee, 29 percent of Latinos lack health insurance, creating major barriers to care. Our Community Wellness programs help families understand the health conditions that disproportionately affect our community and the steps they can take to prevent them. Participants learn how nutrition, movement, and mental well-being contribute to longer, healthier lives.

### Our Impact

- **75** community members participated in Bienestar workout sessions, finding joy, hope, and strength through guided movement and community support.
- **30** Bienestar participants practiced healthier habits and worked to increase their metabolic health through regular group sessions and wellness coaching.
- **568** households supported by providing **2,900** diapers, administering **310** vaccines, and distributing **12,625** pounds of food to our food insecure community.

## HEALTH OUTREACH

Centro Hispano's Community Resources department partners with trusted local institutions to host quarterly health fairs that are free and open to the community. These events increase access to primary care, mammograms, vaccines, and essential health information for Latino families.

### Our Impact

- **4** certified Community Health Workers provided direct outreach and support across Centro Hispano's programs.
- **305** community members received vaccines.
- **891** individuals accessed primary care appointments, dental check-ups, fresh produce, and more.



### IMPACT STORY A Healthier Future for Latino Families

Two years ago, a Centro Hispano participant joined our wellness program determined to improve her prediabetic and high blood pressure levels. She showed remarkable discipline, rarely missing a session. At graduation, she shared something deeply personal: she had hoped to have another baby, but her doctor had explained that her health made another pregnancy difficult and unsafe. With Centro Hispano's guidance, this mom committed to changing that future. By the end of the program, her numbers had improved significantly. Even more meaningful, she was pregnant. Today, she brings her healthy baby back to Centro Hispano, a living reminder of how community-based support can transform health and shape what families believe is possible.



# YOUTH AND FAMILY *Engagement*

At Centro Hispano de East Tennessee we provide enriching, supportive, and culturally affirming opportunities for families and children through stronger foundations, youth and caregiver empowerment, and community building.

Centro Hispano's Youth and Family Engagement programs are designed to meet Latino families where they are, providing safe spaces for learning, growth, and connection.

## AREAS OF IMPACT



## EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION AND AFTERSCHOOL

Knox County Schools serves more than four thousand English Language Learners, most of whom come from Spanish-speaking homes. Approximately 31 percent of these students are showing growth in English proficiency. Those whose parents do not speak English at home often face lower reading and math scores, along with added social and emotional challenges.

Centro Hispano's early childhood and afterschool programs help close these gaps by offering culturally responsive learning environments, academic support, and strong caregiver partnerships. Through supportive relationships and family advocacy, Centro Hispano strengthens academic, social, and emotional skills while building resilience and reducing risk factors for Latino youth.

### Our Impact

- **233** total students engaged across early childhood and afterschool programs.
- **70** children ages 0–5 participated in early childhood education programs with high-quality, literacy-focused environments.
- **163** youth ages 4–14 accessed safe, supportive spaces after school and during the summer.
- **87%** of students demonstrated increased reading proficiency across four afterschool sites: Belle Morris, Lonsdale, Westview, and Norwood.
- **112** parents and caregivers supported through family education programs, including Familias Fuertes, Juntos Aprendemos Mejor, and Padres Empoderados.
- **83%** of Familias Fuertes participants reported improved family relationships through this culturally responsive substance-misuse prevention program.

## POSTSECONDARY ACCESS

Centro Hispano's Postsecondary Access program helps Latino youth connect education to long-term opportunity. Students gain the knowledge, skills, and support needed to pursue higher education, explore career paths, and build financial stability. Through partnerships with local schools, colleges, and workforce programs, they receive college readiness workshops, financial aid guidance, mentorship, and career exposure. Integrated financial literacy and social-emotional learning prepare students not just to access higher education, but to thrive in it and beyond.

### Our Impact

- **52** postsecondary events held, including college fairs, student panels, workshops, classes, and career exploration opportunities.
- **625** students served throughout the year across high schools, community colleges, and Centro Hispano-led programming.
- **394** hours of individualized coaching provided by our Postsecondary Access Coordinator to students and their families.



### IMPACT STORY

## How Centro's College Fair Opened the Door to Camila's Success

Camila's journey began at Centro's College Fair, where she met a University of Tennessee representative who encouraged her to apply to the Business Education for Talented Students (BETS), a 10-day summer program that introduces underrepresented high school rising seniors to the field of business. That single moment led to scholarships, admission to the College of Business, and exclusive career opportunities she never imagined.

As part of our mission to empower the Latino community, Centro Hispano provides post-secondary guidance and resources for all students to reach their full potential. For nearly a decade, our college fairs have opened doors like the one that changed Camila's future.





## WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT

Centro Hispano promotes economic empowerment by providing Latino community members with language skills, vocational training, financial tools, and business support. Through education, coaching, and career pathways, we help families strengthen their economic independence and access greater opportunities.

## MEDICAL INTERPRETERS PROGRAM

Centro Hispano's Medical Interpreter Program trains bilingual community members to serve as skilled medical interpreters, ensuring that Latino patients receive accurate and compassionate care. This program strengthens health equity while opening new career pathways.

### Our Impact

- **2,952** patients served through Centro Hispano-supported interpretation.
- **2,615** hours of no-cost medical interpretation provided across local clinics and hospitals.
- **19** trained interpreters in East Tennessee.

## FINANCIAL EDUCATION PROGRAM

Financial education is essential for strengthening financial stability. Centro Hispano's bilingual financial counseling and workshops help families build credit, budget effectively, and work toward major life milestones, including homeownership.

Through a quarterly homeownership series offered in partnership with **HomeSource East Tennessee**, bilingual financial counselors guide participants through the steps of preparing for mortgage approval.

Monthly financial workshops, offered in partnership with local banks and financial institutions, cover budgeting, savings, debt management, and credit building.

### Our Impact

- **142** community members received individualized financial counseling.
- **48** community members completed homeownership education.
- **52** tax returns prepared in collaboration with AARP.

## ENGLISH AS A SECOND LANGUAGE PROGRAM

Centro Hispano's English as a Second Language (ESL) program offers nine levels of English classes ranging from basic communication to college and career readiness. These classes strengthen literacy, build employability, and support a stronger workforce for Latino families.

### Our Impact

- **256** ESL students learning English, gaining language skills that open doors to education and employment.
- **86%** of students improved their ability to communicate effectively in English.

## GRANDES SUEÑOS EN PEQUEÑAS EMPRESAS PROGRAM

Centro Hispano's small business development program supports aspiring entrepreneurs through coaching, workshops, and one-on-one mentorship. From idea to launch, participants receive guidance on business planning, marketing, financial management, and accessing capital.

### Our Impact

- **143** clients received small business support.
- **536** hours of one-on-one small business consulting strengthened local economies in East Tennessee.

In 2024-2025 Centro Hispano saw a **293% increase** in workshop participants.



### IMPACT STORY From Self-Doubt to Success: Rosalina's Transformation

Rosalina came to Centro Hispano looking for ways to strengthen her business skills, enrolling in our **Grandes Sueños, Pequeñas Empresas Business Bootcamp**. In the beginning, Rosalina was filled with self-doubt, and struggled to use the technology she would need to be successful. Still, her determination kept her moving forward. As she learned new skills, she realized that her business model was not sustainable. Instead of giving up, she stayed committed, learning how to pitch her business, share her story, and talk about her services with clarity and pride. Today, Rosalina and her business have been transformed. She feels empowered to run a sustainable small business, and remains deeply grateful for the support she received at Centro Hispano. Her journey exemplifies what becomes possible when determination, access to the right tools, and community support come together.



# LATINO AWARDS

Celebrating Leadership, Culture And Community

The Latino Awards brings together community leaders, artists, partner organizations, businesses, and families to celebrate our accomplishments and honor members of our society that support and give back to our community.

## 2024 AWARD RECIPIENTS



**CORAZÓN AWARD**  
Cataleya Cantina  
Restaurant



**COMUNIDAD AWARD**  
Pellissippi State  
Community College



**LATINIDAD AWARD**  
Una Esperanza Viva  
Knoxville



# 2024 LATINO AWARDS SPONSORS

HONORING THE PARTNERS WHO MAKE THIS WORK POSSIBLE

*Compañero*

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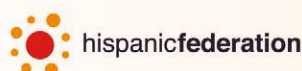
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Team Health  
University of Tennessee, College of Law  
University of Tennessee, College of Social Work  
University of Tennessee, Division of Access  
and Engagement  
Vulcan Materials Company



# Yo soy Centro

Our team is the foundation of Centro Hispano's work. With deep commitment and cultural understanding, they deliver the programs and services that help our community learn, grow, and thrive.

## EXECUTIVE TEAM



**CLAUDIA CABALLERO**  
PRESIDENT AND CEO



**CRISTINA CÁCERES PAREDES**  
VP OF COMMUNITY IMPACT



**MARIA MATNEY**  
VP OF OPERATIONS



**BRANDON LEDFORD**  
DIRECTOR OF WORKFORCE  
DEVELOPMENT AND PROGRAM  
EVALUATION



**MEGAN BAROLET-FOGARTY**  
DIRECTOR OF YOUTH AND  
FAMILY ENGAGEMENT



**PAOLA MEDINA RIOJA**  
DIRECTOR OF DEVELOPMENT

## OUR STAFF

Aqueily Aleman Blanco  
Alan Miramontes Flores  
Anabel Marchan Almas  
Andrea Ramalheira  
Bonnie Ortiz  
Camila Mata  
Claudia Mata  
Colleen Baker  
Celeste Paula

Cheyenne Woods  
Dalia Rodriguez-Rojo  
Dani Ray  
Darling Gonzalez Royero  
Deyvid Tuctuc Guerra  
Doris Fernandez  
Edwin Rosales Rodriguez  
Enid Ludovic  
Esmeralda Contreras

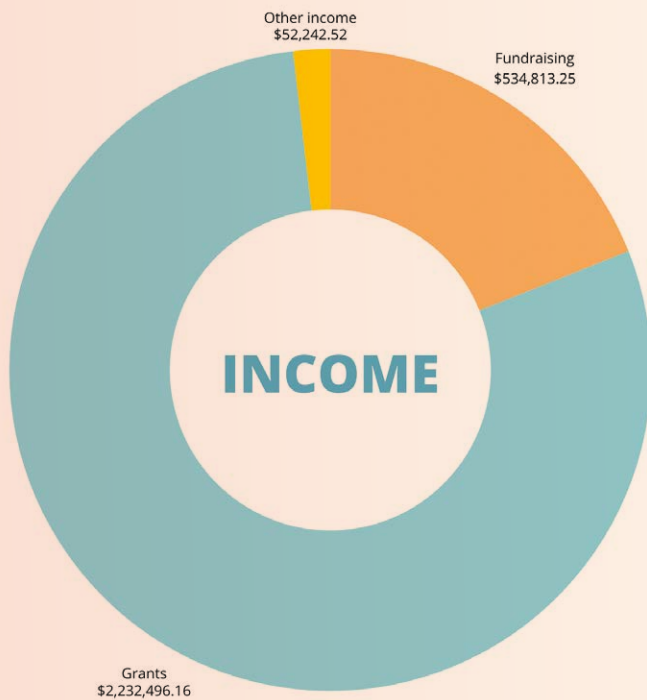
Evelin Felipe-Diaz  
Hilda Castillo  
Jaquelina Schmittlen  
Julia Rodriguez  
Lina Camacho  
Lizbeth Cardona  
Luci Diego  
Marina Cuadra Vert  
Marlene Cervantes

Paola Huerta  
Rubi Flores Reyes  
Rosario Grass-Garcia  
Samantha Benavides  
Teryn Dixon  
Valeria Huerta Ramirez  
Yasuri Rodriguez Martinez

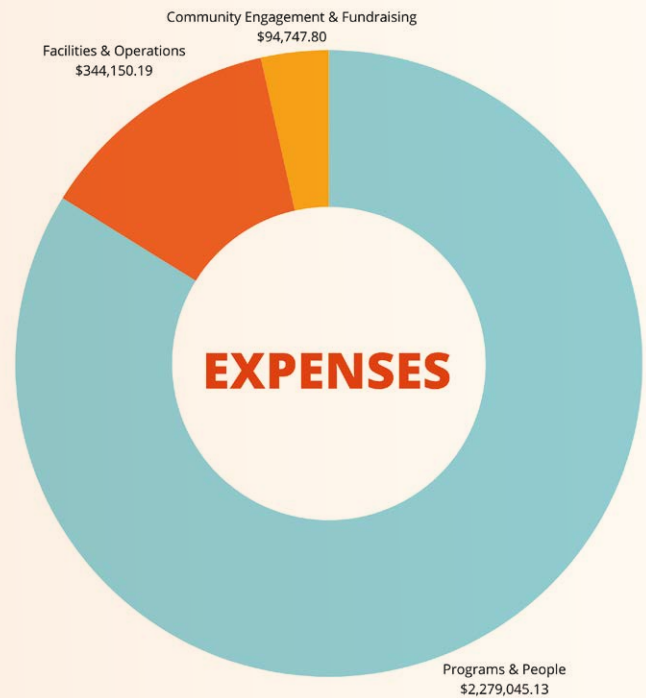


# INCOME AND EXPENSES

In 2024, we leveraged diverse funding sources to expand programs, strengthen families, and deepen our collective impact. These resources allowed us to deliver essential services and support the growing needs of Latino families across East Tennessee.



TOTAL  
**\$2,819,551.93**



TOTAL  
**\$2,717,943.12**







# CELEBRATING A YEAR OF SUPPORT AND IMPACT



**JOIN US!**  
**LET'S BUILD A STRONGER  
COMMUNITY FOR LATINOS**

Together we can expand opportunities  
and provide support for thousands of  
East Tennessee Latino families.



# Gracias TO OUR GENEROUS SUPPORTERS

This work is not done alone. Thank you to the sponsors and donors whose support makes every program, service, and success in this report possible. **Your generosity helps strengthen families and build a stronger community for all.**



Gordon W. Thomas



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