



2024 YEAR-END REPORT

Written by: Daniela Cerón

EMBRACING CHANGE

As I reflect on this last year, the word that comes to mind is “change.” I started in March of this year as the NCLC’s first full-time staff member and spent the summer months being coached by Zulayka to transition into the Project Manager role.

Saying farewell to Zulayka was a big change for the collaborative. She did so much in the last 5 years to bring us to where we are today. One lesson I learned from our time together is that change is part of the human experience and can be an opportunity to reflect on the lessons we’ve learned along the way.



Farewell lunch for Zulayka and Millie

Below I offer a brief recap of what we accomplished together this year.

GRANTMAKING

SUMMER 2024 GRANT CYCLE

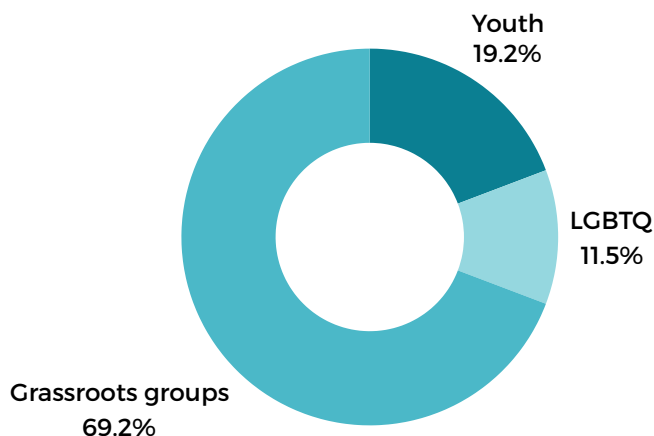


We launched our 6th grantmaking cycle in May 2024. This is the 5th funding cycle we've done via participatory grantmaking. As in previous cycles, our grantmaking strategy focused on providing support to smaller grassroots organizations and networks serving rural areas that are working on building long-term power among the Latinx community in North Carolina.

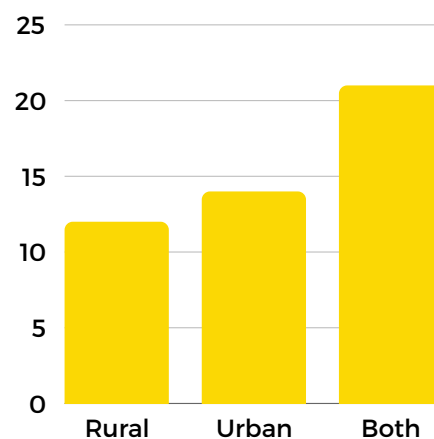
One important change to uplift for this round of grantmaking includes the **prioritization of organizations serving youth and LGBTQ+ communities**. The Unifying Council wanted to make this change in our RFP, because they recognized this was a gap in our previous grantmaking cycles and wanted to be more intentional about including these communities in our work. We also added a value statement (see below) to our RFP to ensure that organizations receiving grants from our fund are in alignment with these shared values.

VALUES: We are pro-Black, pro-Indigenous, pro-Lesbian, Gay, Bi, Trans, and Queer, pro-worker, and pro-migrant because we recognize that our work towards collective liberation includes ALL members of our community. (Language borrowed from Mijente [Principles of Unity](#))

We received **47 total applications**- the most we've ever received in a funding cycle to date! The applicant pool data showed that 71% of all applicants said they served rural communities or a mix of both rural and urban counties and 36% of applicants were from organizations with budgets of less than \$50,000. This data is a reminder that the NCLC is continuing to meet a need for orgs who are excluded from other traditional sources of funding due to their location and/or size.



Applicant data: Priority Funding Areas



Applicant data: Rural or Urban?

GRANTMAKING



In the end, the Unifying Council selected **25 organizations to receive \$35,000 each (\$17,500 for 2 years)**. You can see the full list of the 2024 grant recipients [HERE](#). With the addition of this grant cycle, the NCLC has moved a total of \$3.4 million into the hands of Latinx-led and Latinx-serving organizations statewide in North Carolina to date.

WNC GRANTS

After Hurricane Helene hit Western North Carolina in early October, we used some of our reserves to provide **\$5,000 grants in emergency aid to 10 Latinx led and serving organizations** responding to the crisis by providing basic needs and mutual aid assistance to Latinx families impacted by the hurricane. Six were current grantees and the other 4 were trusted organizations who were recommended to us by a Unifying Council member who vouched for the good work they were doing.

With help from one of our Unifying Council members we also published a [short brief](#) highlighting the needs of the WNC Latinx community along with a list of Latinx-led and serving organizations. This brief was shared with our funder audience as well as with community members to encourage folks not to overlook our grassroots groups and donate directly to organizations who have those existing relationships and know how to respond best.

With the upcoming presidential administration, I would like the NCLC to think about strategies we can use to better support grantees when unexpected situations arise (ie: a rapid response fund).



Food and diaper distribution by
Cooperativa Tierra Fertil



Mutual aid distribution to families by
Comité Popular de Asheville por la
Justicia Social

COMMUNICATIONS



STORYTELLING REPORT, NEWSLETTER, AND SOCIAL MEDIA



Last year we partnered with [Iximche Media](#) to help capture the impact of our work via videos and photos. They created two videos featuring interviews with our grantees: here is a [10-minute version](#) and a [4-minute version](#). To accompany these videos they also created a written report that contains some

of the photographs they captured as well as reflections on the ripple effects that these grants have had on Latinx communities across our state. You can read the report [HERE](#).

Our rebranding, along with our storytelling report was the catalyst to create more awareness of our work with the broader community. This year we launched our [LinkedIn](#), [Instagram](#), and [Facebook](#) accounts and also began sending monthly newsletters with updates, opportunities, and community events to our listserve. This is the first time the NCLC has engaged in communications in an intentional way, so we are still learning about tactics and tools we can use with our communication channels to increase engagement with our work.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

One of the big goals I had this year was to expand my network and establish relationships with folks in both the philanthropic and nonprofit sector. My reasons for this were to **1) introduce myself as the new Project Manager for NCLC and 2) better understand the context of where the NCLC sits in relation to local/national philanthropy, and the Latinx nonprofit sector across the state.**

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT



NC ROAD TRIP

One of the first things I did as the new project manager was to drive across North Carolina to **meet in-person with each of the 8 Unifying Council members**. During these one-on-one conversations, I heard from the committee about the biggest needs they are seeing in their region and learned more about the work of their individual organizations. They shared their experiences serving on the Unifying Council and offered reflections on how they've grown since being involved with the Collaborative over the past 5 years. I'm so glad I did these "mini field trips!" They helped me build trust with the Unifying Council and better understand the landscape of Latinx orgs in the state.



Visit with Magaly Uridiales at JMPRO TV office in Asheville

AMEXCAN FUNDER PANEL



In April, Zulayka was invited to participate on a funder panel during AMEXCAN's (Asociación de Mexicanos en Carolina del Norte, Inc) "Community Promoters in North Carolina " conference in April 2024. Alongside some representatives of our partner funders (Z. Smith Reynolds and Blue Cross Blue Shield) the panel covered topics such as **equity in**

philanthropy and how funders can better support Latinx organizations in the state. This event helped spread awareness about the work of the Collaborative and was one of the first opportunities I had to connect with Latinx community members who are part of our network.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT



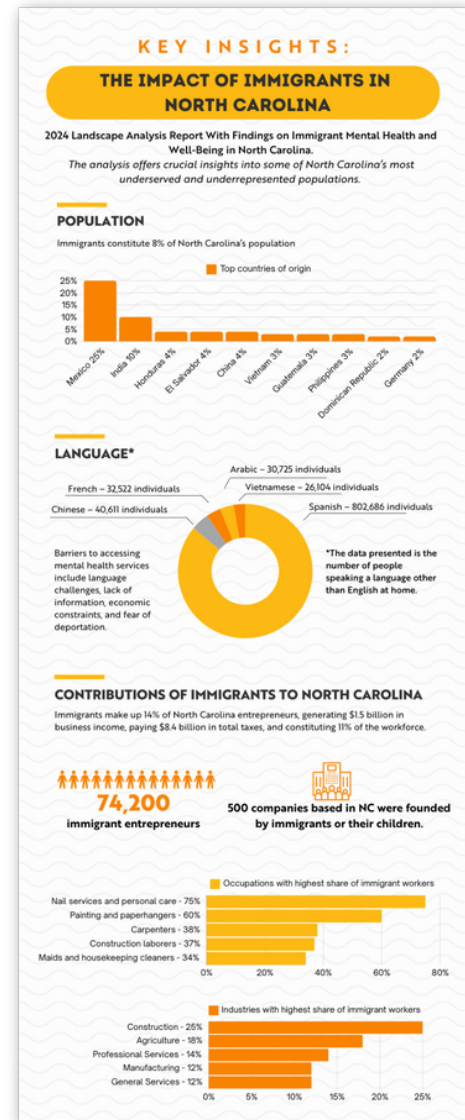
IMMIGRANT & REFUGEE MENTAL HEALTH POLICY WORKGROUP

In September I was invited to represent the NCLC in a policy workgroup put together by the North Carolina Institute of Medicine and El Futuro to focus on **creating recommendations to increase funding for immigrant and refugee mental health**. This workgroup expressed interest in collaborative philanthropy and I was asked to give a short presentation about our model to share the lessons we've learned to-date. The take-aways from the presentation helped inform what a similar process could look like for this initiative. A final recommendation to emerge from this workgroup was to use the Immigrant Mental Health Solidarity Network as an avenue for collaborative philanthropy and participatory grantmaking. This opportunity was meaningful in aligning the NCLC work broadly with other immigrant and refugee initiatives happening statewide and created new avenues for resource sharing and relationships across different sectors.

COMMUNITY MEETINGS

Other meetings I had throughout the year were with several Latinx led and serving organizations including: **Connecting Communities, Faith Action International House, Flor de Hidalgo, Southeastern Immigrant Rights Network (SEIRN), and Blueprint NC.**

My conversations with these organizations helped me learn about the work happening across the state, what barriers some groups were facing when it came to funding, and how the NCLC could partner and support organizations who are not grantees.



El Futuro 2024 Landscape Analysis Infographic

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT



CONFERENCE ATTENDANCE

In an effort to understand the organizing landscape in North Carolina and in the South more broadly, I attended 2 conferences:

1. **The Southern Summit** hosted by Southern Vision Alliance and
2. **Encuentro 2024: Elevating LGBTQ Latinx Health** hosted by Latinos in the South, a program of the Latino Commission on Aids.

Both conferences provided me with space to connect and be in community with NCLC grantee recipients. These spaces created new opportunities for connection and learning from other southern organizations and funders who are also doing power-building work.



Connecting with Carolina Migrant Network at SVA's Southern Summit



Connecting with WAVE and Charlotte Gaymers Network at Encuentro 2024

FINAL REFLECTIONS



As we close this year of newness and change, I am reminded of the African proverb that was shared during one of the conferences I attended this year. It says: **“If you want to go fast, go alone. If you want to go far, go together.”**

I walked into this role earlier this year unsure what to expect, but as time passed I've learned many valuable lessons about what it means to be in community and the importance of relationships. I'm inspired by the passion of our people to keep transforming the NCLC into a space for shared learning and power-building. We have a lot left to accomplish but I am excited to see how we can continue going farther together.



This year each Unifying Council member received an art piece we commissioned by NC Latina artist [Celeste Aguirre Oñate](#). The image depicts hands holding a dandelion (our logo) with a honeybee (NC state insect) over a backdrop of stars and mountains. The image represents us working together to foster the growth of the collaborative. The stars represent our dreams for the future and the mountains represent our home countries and how our work is informed by where we come from. They loved it!