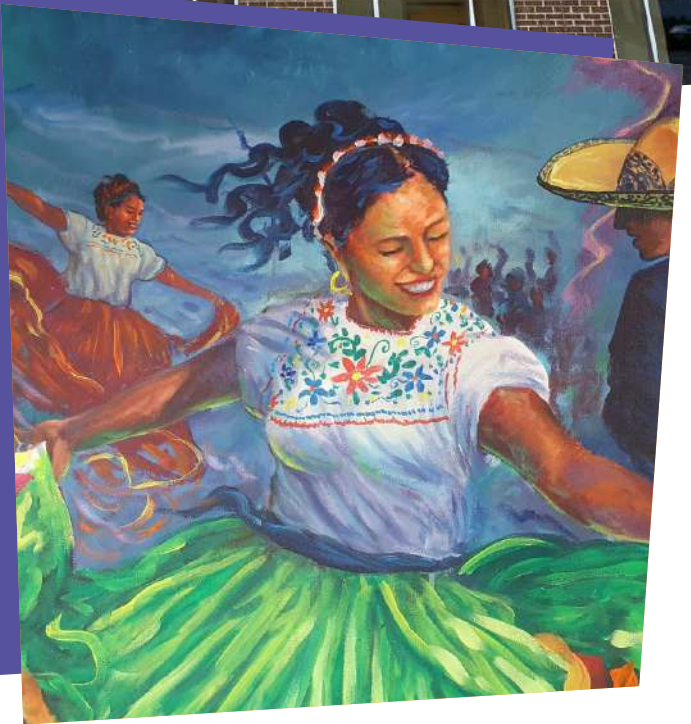


Impact Report

Bridging the gaps during the Covid-19 Crisis 2020-2021



CLUES Mission

CLUES advances social and economic equity and wellbeing for Latinos by building upon our strengths and cultures, uplifting our community, and activating leadership for systemic change.

About CLUES

CLUES is Minnesota's largest Latino-led nonprofit organization, founded in 1981 by and for Latinos. Our work is to ensure the advancement of social and economic equity and wellbeing for Latinos in Minnesota. CLUES has offices on the East Side of St. Paul, Lake Street in Minneapolis, and also Willmar and Austin in Greater MN.

Our Mission

CLUES advances social and economic equity and wellbeing by building upon our strengths and cultures, uplifting individuals, and families, and activating leadership for systemic change.

Our Value Proposition

CLUES culturally anchored interventions and networks of support help individuals and community feel valued and connected, while providing pathways out of poverty and resources needed to lead healthy and thriving lives.

Our Strategic Goals



Pillars of our Work

Advancing Prosperity

- Workforce & Employment Opportunities
- Education & Asset-Building
- Housing support & Interventions
- Entrepreneurship
- Lending Circles

Advancing Community Leadership

- Engaging Community Voices & Leadership
- Advocating for Equity & System's Change
- Addressing racial & economic justice

Advancing Community Wellness

- Supportive Interventions
- Behavioral Health Clinics
- Family stability
- Access to food & healthcare

Advancing Cultural Engagement

- Building Cultural Legacy & Connections
- Developing Latino Artists
- Strengthening Cultural Destinations & Neighborhoods

Dear friends and Supporters

We invite you to journey with us through 2020 and 2021 and the impact of COVID-19 in our community. When COVID-19 was first detected in early 2020, our staff quickly moved into rapid response mode, shifting our programming and re-positioning our work to meet the immediate needs of community. We launched a Latino Relief Fund to provide emergency cash assistance to marginalized families who were excluded from federal relief and recovery programs and launched a bilingual COVID-19 hotline to provide information and support to thousands over the last two years.

We doubled down our efforts in 2021 to deal with persistent gaps including food insecurity, economic distress, homelessness, access to vaccinations, and behavioral health resources. Sadly, the pandemic has left many Latinos facing further economic instability and emotional stress. Latinos are more likely to have experienced loss of income, jobs, food insecurity, and housing instability. Non-citizen immigrants and mixed-immigration status households are suffering even more as they are excluded from relief and recovery programs.

The commitment to boost up strong and resilient families remains at the center of our work. As we address fundamental economic inequalities, we aim to create sustainable, long-term resources and solutions that address ongoing access gaps. The impact of our efforts has resulted in a few long-term solutions that bridge access gaps, including:

INCREASING ACCESS TO BEHAVIORAL HEALTH CLINICAL SERVICES. In 2021, CLUES received an award to expand and build capacity to become a Certified Community Behavioral Health Clinic (CCBHC) from the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA). This grant will support us to become one of the largest Latinx CCBHCs in the nation.

ADDRESSING FOOD INSECURITY. Today, one in six Latino families suffers from food insecurity. To provide access to cultural healthy food for community, CLUES expanded Canasta Familiar in Minneapolis, Saint Paul, and Austin, and became Minnesota Food Shelf Program.



INCREASING AFFORDABLE QUALITY CHILDCARE.

Getting parents back to work is critical to the economic recovery of the State. CLUES will support working parents by providing affordable quality, culturally responsive childcare for Latino families and launching an Early Childhood Development Center on the East Side of St. Paul. In addition, targeted microbusiness development coaching and training for informal daycare providers will help increase access to resources for business owners and affordable daycare gaps.

BUILDING ASSETS AND IMPROVING MINNESOTA'S ECONOMY. Getting people back to work, retooling and reskilling workers, and increasing access to cash, are essential asset-building and poverty reduction strategies. Providing access to paid internships, increased distance learning, technology education, and employment coaching, are helping us reduce employment barriers. In addition, our micro enterprise programs are designed to help increase supplemental household income.

The resilience, dedication and strength of our staff and community, and the families we serve continue to inspire our work. Together, we will continue to address challenges and inequities as we emerge stronger to unleash Latinos' full potential for contributing to Minnesota's economic recovery and growth.

On behalf of our participants, board members, and staff, we thank you for your continued support and contributions for the wellbeing of our community and advancing socio-economic equity for the families we serve.

With much gratitude,

Ruby Lee,
President and CEO



Impact of COVID-19 on our community

CLUES was uniquely well-equipped to respond to the COVID-19 crisis and rapidly scaled its services to support the community.

COVID-19 has had a far-reaching impact on Minnesota's Latino communities. Latinos experienced higher infection rates, hospitalizations, deaths, and lower vaccination rates. Beyond the health implications, Latinos have faced significant financial hardship, including job loss and wage reduction, housing instability, and a widening of educational disparities for Latino children. As a Latino organization, we felt this impact deeply, professionally, and personally. Our personal lived experiences made us even more determined to respond to this crisis with urgency, creativity, and compassion. Our strategies were guided by our values and the expertise we have developed over 40 years of implementing community-driven solutions.

Core aspects of our COVID-19 response:

- **A holistic, multigenerational approach** that supported the entire family.
- **A Spanish-language hotline and emergency housing and financial assistance** to meet the most urgent needs.
- **Rapid Response navigators who provided individualized, culturally responsive service. Immigrant focused**, ensuring undocumented individuals had access to resources and were treated with dignity and respect.
- **Setting a new standard for placing equity** at the center of all practices and policies.
- **Building collaborative relationships** across sectors to best meet the needs of community.



KEY PARTNER TESTIMONIALS

The staff and leadership at CLUES took the time to understand the program, provided actionable feedback on processes and program documents and proved themselves to be a valuable partner in the Emergency Rental Assistance endeavor. City staff are grateful for their challenging work and dedication to the residents of Saint Paul.

- **Sarah Zorn, Housing Finance and Development, City of St. Paul**

2020 – 2021

COVID-19 Response

at a Glance

Housing Stability

\$3.5+ M

of direct rental and utilities assistance provided to families impacted by COVID-19

Housing Stability

4,524

families were supported to obtain and maintain stable housing

Emergency Food

1+ M

pounds of food were distributed – providing approximately 900,000 meals for 30,671 families

Employment

447

individuals placed in new jobs

Employment

678

individuals connected to unemployment benefits

Vaccination

2,464

individuals received COVID-19 vaccines

Direct Cash Emergency Assistance (early 2020)

1,300

individuals received \$833,234 in direct cash assistance to cover emergency needs

Outreach and Awareness

902,146

individuals reached through digital health education and 147,700 individuals reached via virtual educational events

Outreach and Awareness

6,228

people served by our bilingual COVID-19 hotline and connected to timely resources

Advancing Community Prosperity

CLUES fosters economic and racial equity by cultivating access to opportunities and growing institutional and individual assets owned by and for Latinos.

Ensuring stable and safe housing- Housing instability was one of the most critical challenges Latinos faced throughout the pandemic. CLUES began immediate response efforts by connecting families to rental assistance dollars and supportive services. Through partnerships with local and state government and private funding sources, CLUES provided **\$3,557,665 of direct rental and utilities assistance to 4,524 households impacted by COVID-19.** We also provided access to temporary housing to 288 individuals - 65% of whom transitioned into permanent housing through our housing services.

Maintaining employment and creating career opportunities- Early on, Latinos began to feel the economic effects of the pandemic with many individuals experiencing lay-offs or decreased hours. Our staff transitioned to online platforms to offer employment training, job search assistance, and hiring fairs with the objective of placing participants in good jobs in high-growth customer service, healthcare, manufacturing, and transportation industries. **Despite a challenging environment, staff placed 447 individuals in employment.**

Supporting and investing in Latino micro-entrepreneurship- With uncertainty in the job market, many individuals began seeking new ways to earn income. **187 individuals attended our micro-enterprise workshops and coaching sessions to begin planning their own micro business.** With the technical assistance and support of CLUES, 19 new micro-businesses were launched- ranging from cleaning services, handcrafted products, food trucks, to landscaping services. Ten of these businesses presented at CLUES' 2021 Fiesta Latina, selling products for the first time.



Increasing access to Adult Basic Education- Due to COVID-19, we shifted our Adult Basic Education workshops to a virtual platform to provide continued learning and engagement opportunities. **We served 1,123 individuals who received over 30,000 hours of instruction** throughout our different programming, including English as a Second Language, Computer Skills and Certification, Citizenship and GED preparation. Our team responded to the digital divide and supported many parents in learning basic computer skills for work and to support their children in digital learning.

Supporting Friends Family and Neighbors (FFN) early childcare Latina providers –CLUES launched new programming to support FFN providers, including comprehensive education and training to improve quality of care. **CLUES has served 120 Latina FFN Providers**, including 30 who completed CPR/AED/First Aid training and are supporting five providers to become Legal Non-Licensed providers.

Maria G. CLUES participant:

"As a single parent with two children, I'm the only income earner for my children. My job has been impacted since the Covid-19 pandemic started and CLUES helped me to cover my rent expenses during difficult times. Thankfully CLUES exists and helps many families, including mine."

Rosa M. CLUES participant:

"When the pandemic started, I was laid off from my job, and I do not have unemployment benefits because I am an undocumented immigrant. As a parent, I need to earn money to provide for my family, paying rent and buying necessities like food. CLUES offers services to Latinos, such as free food and rental support and we are very thankful for their generosity."

Jose R. CLUES participant:

"I lost my job due to the Covid-19 pandemic. It was an awful experience. I want to thank CLUES and the team and all the organizations supporting CLUES because they helped me with my family's needs by supporting us economically and providing me the opportunity to participate in a free certification program to find a better job."



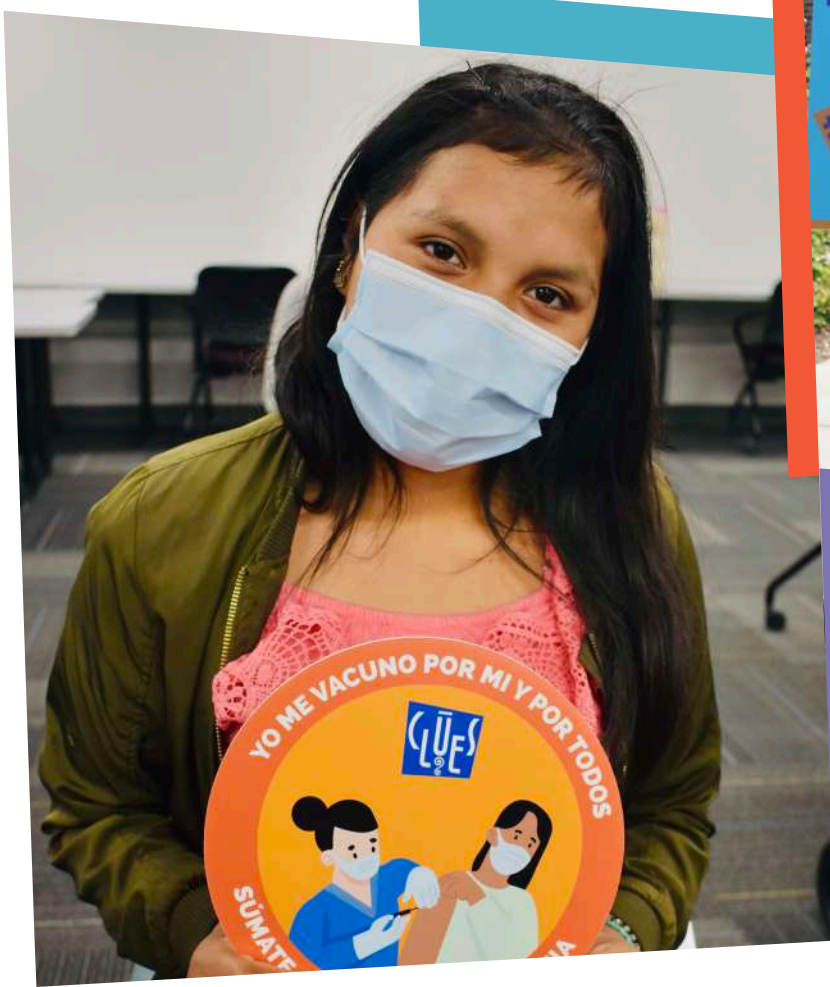
Advancing Community Wellness

CLUES advances Community Wellness by facilitating individual and collective transformation, healing, and wellbeing.

Ensuring access to food- Access to food was at the top of our pandemic response priorities as we began to see the needs for emergency food expand exponentially in spring 2020. With lost wages and limited assistance available, many families turned to CLUES for support. We quickly ramped up our capacity to provide healthy and culturally specific food and transformed our delivery model to ensure safe access via curbside pick-up and delivery. **We distributed 1,073,598 pounds of food – approximately 900,000 meals- to 30,671 families.** CLUES is now a certified Food Shelf, serving over 500 families per week in Minneapolis, Saint Paul and Austin, MN.

Responding to trauma via telehealth- The pandemic brought about and amplified many different stressors among our client population. In April 2020, CLUES' team quickly transitioned our Behavioral Health services to telehealth to maintain continuity of services to all clients, including the uninsured. Virtual mental health workshops were provided to support individuals and families experiencing anxiety, grief and isolation and to promote mindfulness and coping techniques for stress reduction. **Twelve sessions were presented virtually and viewed more than 10,000 times.** Annually **250 children/youth and 600 adults were served through our comprehensive Behavioral Health Community Programs.**





Addressing COVID-19 health disparities- CLUES provided access to reliable information and vaccinations in efforts to keep the community safe and combat significant disparities in infection and hospitalization rates. **Over 6,228 individuals were connected to resources via our COVID-19 hotline and close to 3,000 individuals were immunized at our vaccination clinics-** in partnership with M Health Fairview.

Engaging Latino parents and supporting Early Childhood development- In 2020, we engaged 30 Latino parents and caregivers in educational workshops and to inform our pilots. **In 2021, 364 adults and children were served via early childhood pilot programs** to empower them to be their children's first teachers, increase early literacy, and connect them with culturally responsive materials. 35 families received evidence-based in-home parenting services annually.

Providing crisis intervention- The pandemic exacerbated family instability and violence given the high levels of isolation and stress. Trained staff provided crisis intervention and intensive case management services to those most in need. **115 survivors of sexual and domestic violence were served** via support groups, advocacy, and crisis intervention annually. **630 adults and children experiencing mental health challenges received case management services.**

Healing and cultural engagement through the arts- Loss of community and connection were challenges of the pandemic. Our arts and cultural programming worked to promote hope, connection, and healing via public art, local Latino art exhibits, and hosting virtual and limited in-person events. Our first Day of the Dead parade in 2021 in Minneapolis and community workshops were attended by over **10,000 participants, 10,000 attendees visited three exhibits in our Saint Paul Art Gallery**, and our virtual events reached about 8,000 people.

Ana C. Behavioral Health participant:

"I want to thank you for everything you have done for me. You have no idea the impact that you have had in my life, it has been a blessing to know you and connect with CLUES. The truth is, I've refound the desire to live. God works in mysterious ways but even though we do not see it, his works and love are reflected through his children."

Advancing Community Leadership

CLUES works to advance Community Leadership by building, strengthening, and activating community influence, connections, and power to create social and systemic change.

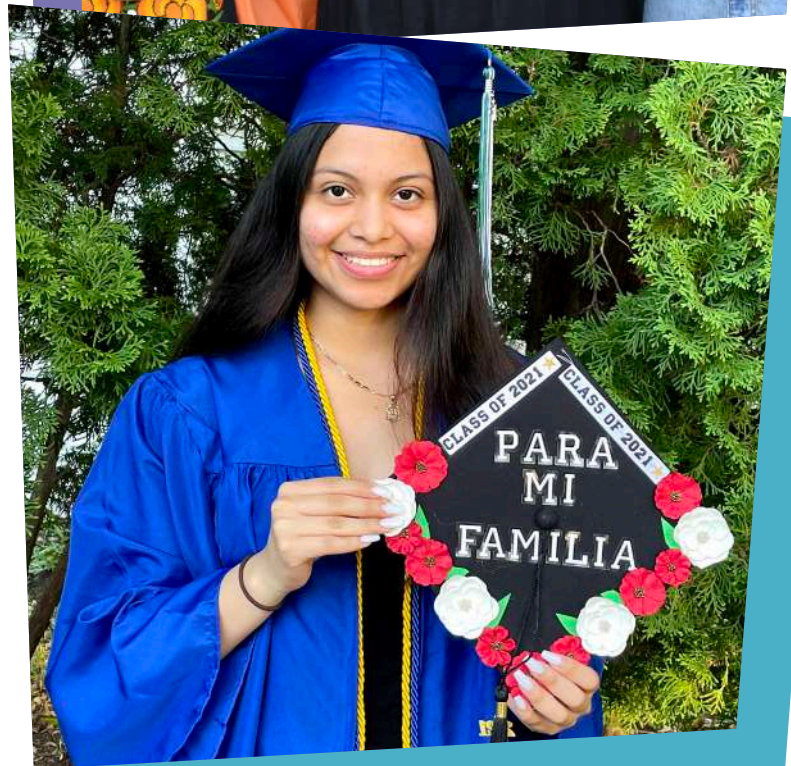
Engaging Latino Youth- 235 youth participants were engaged via our **Teen Tech Center** in career exploration and increasing technology skills. Targeted tutoring and supports were provided during the pandemic and to support students through distance learning. Another **129 youth participated in our Youth in Action (YA!) program**, participating in mentoring, leadership development, and supports for high-school graduation and applying to higher education. Even during these challenging years, YA! students have achieved a 98% on-time graduation rate.

Advocating for equity in housing- CLUES leaders and staff have been strong advocates promoting equitable policies and practices to improve access to safe and affordable housing for Latinos. CLUES leaders advocated for access to emergency rental assistance funds for all community members regardless of immigration status.

Advancing systems change and equity for Latino children- CLUES is actively working with MN Department of Human Services and other partners to remove barriers for access to early childhood, such as addressing barriers of becoming a Legal Non-Licensed provider and developing new tools in Spanish outlining children's transition into kindergarten.

Teen Tech Center participant:

"Now that I'm part of the Teen Tech Center at CLUES, I can help my community, I can succeed in technology, I can learn about coding, I can help others, I can do a lot of things. I just want to be part of a group that helps others succeed, as well as myself".





Latinx Resilience

Cadex Herrera, Zamara Cuyún, Gustavo Lira García, Pablo Helm-Hernandez, Margaret Ogas
2021 - Acrylic on polytab
(On view in the CLUES Latino Art Gallery. September 18, 2021 - August 18, 2022)

Board of Directors

*as of May 2022

Executive Committee

- Chairperson - Virginia (Ginny) Arthur, President - Metropolitan State University
- Vice-Chairperson - Hazzen Muñoz, Director Global Talent - Contingent Workforce Solution - Ecolab
- Treasurer - Manuel (Manny) San Miguel, Senior Vice President - Qualitech
- Secretary: Ana Carolina Queiroz, VP of Finance - Foods Ingredients and Bio-Industrial Enterprise (FIBI) - Cargill

Members At Large

- Miguel A. Ruiz Diaz, Chief of Staff-Past - Regions Hospital, Health Partners, St Paul, MN
- David Garcia, Senior Director, Home & Services - Best Buy
- Erick Garcia Luna, Regional Outreach Director - Federal Reserve of Minneapolis
- Marco Antonio Ortiz, Latin America IT Manager - 3M
- Angelina Vilouta, Accenture Managing Director - Global Academy Lead - Accenture Academy

"CLUES' culturally specific and rapid response to the COVID-19 crisis has had a profound impact on the lives of underserved individuals and families, who were disproportionately impacted by the virus and the resulting socio-economic effects. The crisis highlighted and intensified the inequities faced by many in our community and illuminated the essential need for all of us to provide long-term support for cultural organizations like CLUES".



Ginny Arthur,
CLUES Board
of Directors
Chairperson

iMuchas gracias! Thank you from CLUES!

We thank our donors and supporters for their partnership during these challenging times.

Early in the pandemic, we had an outpouring of support from individual donors, friends and teachers, in the amount of \$81,790 for our Latino Relief Fund, putting cash directly into the hands of families in need.

Many of our key funders stepped up in a big way by providing supplemental or targeted COVID-19 funding to support our efforts throughout 2020-2021. Funders that provided targeted COVID-19 grants of \$100,000+ included:

- Carolyn Foundation
- Council of Foundations - Minnesota Disaster Recovery Fund
- Family Housing Fund
- McKnight Foundation
- Patrick and Aimee Butler Family Foundation
- Pohlad Family Foundation

Many other foundations, corporations, and family funds provided generous gifts and grants as well for our rapid response initiatives, and many long-standing funders provided additional flexibility on existing grants that allowed us to adapt to meet community needs. Likewise, CLUES partnered with and received CARES Act funding from the following local government entities:

- Hennepin County
- MN Department of Health
- MN Department of Human Services Office of Economic Opportunity
- MN Food Shelf Program
- MN Housing
- MN Office of Justice Programs
- Ramsey County

For a complete list of CLUES' generous corporate, private, government and individual donors, please visit www.clues.org. We thank all our donors for their continued support!



www.clues.org



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