

New Latina Savings Initiative set to launch this year and other exciting Centro news...

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NEWSLETTER - SPRING 2021

NEWSLETTER CONTENTS:

- [A letter from our Executive Director](#)
- [Tres Reyes 2021: 800+ Toys Delivered to Kids Across the County](#)
- [Camino's CNA Program Highlight: Congratulations Eli!](#)
- [Welcoming Alondra to Centro's Team](#)
- [Youth Leadership Summit 2021](#)
- [Join the Agency Partner Program](#)
- [Centro In The News](#)

A letter from our Executive Director

Dear friends,

Thank you all for being by our side as we have navigated together the devastating challenges of COVID-19 over the last year, and the persistent toll racism continues to have in our country and in our communities. It has been deeply meaningful to feel your presence and your support and to know that you walk alongside us and stand next to us as we continue to fight for our Latinx community.

As we move into Spring, a time of renewal and re-birth, I wanted to share with you a few updates about Centro.

COVID 19:

- **Operations:** The health of our community and our staff is our number one priority. Centro continues to operate remotely for now and respond to increased demands from the community. All programs and services continue to be offered virtually until the building is safe enough for re-opening. More information on our [website](#).
- **COVID Relief:** Looking for a high impact way to provide direct support to our families? Consider supporting a family in need through the [LCA Relief Fund](#). 100% of money donated goes directly to COVID relief and recovery.
- **Vaccines:** Centro is actively involved in a public information campaign to bring information about vaccines to the Latinx community! And to help individuals sign up for shots. Learn more on our [Facebook page](#).

New programs:

- **Avanzando:** Launched in 2020 with seed funding from UnidosUS this program focuses on providing critical support to Latinx students transitioning from high school to college. [Learn more.](#)
- **Progreso:** Launched in 2020 with funding from the Hispanic Heritage Foundation, this program focuses on providing critical skills to help Latinx workers overcome barriers to advancement and developing their careers. [Learn more.](#)
- **Latina Savings Initiative:** A collaboration with the national Women's Institute for a Secure Retirement (WISER), this program was just funded by CUNA Mutual Foundation and is slated to start this year. [Read the full release.](#)

Special thanks:

- To the **Oscar Rennebohm Foundation** for a renewal of their \$300,000 three-year commitment to the Escalera Program at La Follett High School. The foundation provided initial seed funding to start this program in 2018 and their renewed commitments means Escalera will continue to be offered at La Follette until at least 2024.
- To our corporate partners who are members of our **Agency Partner Program**, especially our Committed Partners CUNA Mutual Group, UW Health and Wisconsin Distributors as well as our Investing, Sustaining, and Seed partners for collectively providing over \$300,000 unrestricted support to Centro annually. Thank you for your continued commitment to Centro and to the community! Learn more or join the program [here](#).

Upcoming Events:

- **ONLINE this FRIDAY, APRIL 16: ¡Sabores Latinos! Virtual cooking class** featuring Chef Sujhey Beisser of [Five Senses Palate](#), offers a unique experience to submerge yourself in the Latino food culture with a step-by-step cooking class in English. Organized by students from Madison College, this fundraiser supports the Centro [BECAS \(education scholarships\) Program](#). [CLICK HERE TO REGISTER](#).
- **ONLINE on THURSDAY, May 20th, 9:00 AM: Centro Annual Strategic Update.** By invitation only. For more information please contact nina@micentro.org.

As always please continue to engage with us, stay in touch and reach out to us. Because it is only together that we can accomplish our vision of supporting a thriving and dynamic Latinx community in Dane County today and in the future.

In community,

Karen Menendez Collier

Tres Reyes 2021: 800+ Toys Delivered to Kids Across the County

**TRES REYES
CELEBRATION 2021**



FAMILIES SERVED

317

KIDS SERVED

808



ZIP CODES

32



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In January. Centro's **Tres Reyes Celebration** saw Centro staff and volunteers deliver a record number of toys to children across Dane County. The event, which usually takes place at the agency, was organized as a delivery event this year instead to preserve the safety of the community.

The event was held this year in honor of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. who once said, "Life's most persistent and urgent question is, 'What are you doing for others?'" Like Dr. King, at Centro, we believe that one of the greatest measures in life is what you are doing to make life better for others, especially our children.

Thanks to the support of our agency partners, volunteers, supporters, and staff, who helped to organize and deliver toys across the county. And thank you to all of our donors who made it possible for us to bring smiles to children's faces. This event showed that when heart and commitment are aligned great things can be accomplished. Thank you!

We are already gearing up for Tres Reyes 2022! To learn more or to donate a toy please visit our [event page](#) and view our [wishlist](#).

Camino's CNA Program Highlight: Congratulations Eli!

Nearly three years ago, former healthcare provider, Eli, from Nicaragua moved to Madison, WI. He wanted to continue his passion for serving others in need. So he did whatever he could to reach this goal, gaining specialized skills, enhancing his English communication, and working on developing a professional career in the healthcare industry any way he could.

He knew that one way to do this was by participating in Centro's **Caminos CNA program**. When the CNA Program was moved to a virtual setting Eli signed up and graduated from the program last summer as part of its first virtual cohort.

Since completing the program, Eli has been hired by Public Health of Dane County as a COVID-19 response specialist. In his role he is responsible for providing support to the Latino community by facilitating COVID-19 testing and safety and by matching families with resources. In addition, he has completed his certification as a phlebotomist and is on the verge of completing a certification as a medical assistant.



Congratulations, Eli!

Welcoming Alondra to Centro's Team

Alondra Vazquez Rodriguez
Caminos Finance Pathways Specialist

Alondra is a recent graduate from the University of Wisconsin-Madison. She earned her BBA in Management and Human Resources from the Wisconsin School of Business.

Alondra previously worked as a Talent Acquisition Intern and Talent Development Intern within the Human Resource Department at UW-Credit Union. Before this, she worked within the Human Resource Department at UW-Madison Memorial Union as an HR Student Helper.

During her undergraduate years, Alondra took on multiple leadership roles such as the Treasurer, Academic, and Professional Development Chair, and most recently Student Advisor for the UW-Madison Latinx Student Union. She also helped organize and lead the Hispanic Heritage Month Latinx Ball Planning Committee. During her participation in multiple organizations, Alondra enjoys providing resources, guidance, and support to students of color specifically Latinx students to help make their UW-Madison experience memorable and welcoming. She hopes to continue to develop this passion at Centro by providing the necessary guidance and resources to help others develop their talents and skills.



Youth Leadership Summit 2021

Latino Youth Summit is a free two-day conference for Latino Middle School students in the Madison area. Summit participants gathered together online, getting a taste of college life and the resources available in their community. During the Latino Youth Summit, students learned from UW's Office of Financial Aid. The workshop helped students explore finances and shared tools to help students feel more confident. Students not only attended workshops in these subjects, they also discussed key takeaways and reflect on the college journey.



Join the Agency Partner Program



AGENCY PARTNER PROGRAM

2021

At Centro, we offer a progressive approach to corporate partnerships -- offering our partners the ability to deepen their engagement as our relationship grows. Check out the various opportunities and join us today!

View a list of our [current partners](#).

[BECOME A 2021 PARTNER](#)

Centro In The News

Learn more about Centro by reading the [latest news.](#)



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