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CIELO Fund Announces \$360,000 to 31 Organizations in 2024 Round of Grants

RIVERSIDE, Calif.: The *Cultivating Inland Empire Latino Opportunity, or, CIELO Fund* at the Inland Empire Community Foundation (IECF) announced today \$360,000 in its 2024 grant funding to 31 Riverside and San Bernardino County Latino-led and serving organizations. This announcement brings the CIELO Fund’s total investment in the region’s Latino community to more than \$765,000 in grants and scholarships since launching in 2022.

“We are proud to continue uplifting and investing in Latino community game-changers who are making immeasurable contributions to our region each and every day,” **said Jesse Melgar, IECF Vice Chair and CIELO Fund Founding Chair.** “This round of grantees embody the best of the Inland Empire – innovators who do all they can to provide critical services and resources to those most in need. We are inspired by these groups who make our neighborhoods, our communities and our region better.”

Latinos are now the majority of the Inland Empire, making up 51.5% of the population. Projections by the USC Center for Latinx Studies show that that number is expected to balloon to 74% by 2060. With this growth comes increased opportunity but also areas where disparities persist for Latinos in the region. The CIELO Fund’s Leadership and Grantmaking Committee is funding organizations this round with operating budgets of less than \$500,000 to have a greater impact at the community level. Funding was prioritized for organizations working in the following areas: leadership development & capacity building, economic mobility, educational equity, health equity, housing security, environmental equity & climate change, racial equity and immigrant inclusion. Grants were also awarded to local and regional media outlets and projects aiming to uplift positive narratives with impact about the Latino community in the Inland Empire.

The **2024 CIELO Fund grantees** are:

Asociación de Emprendedo@s
Canyon Children’s Legal Services
Casa Blanca Home of Neighborly Services
Centro del Inmigrante
Chicano Latino Alumni Association of UC Riverside

Civil Rights Institute of Inland Southern California
Ezekiel's Gift of Love Coachella Valley
Frontline Observer
Garcia Center for the Arts
Get in Motion Entrepreneurs
Happier Life Project
Herencia Mariachi Academy
Highlanders Boxing Club
Hispanic Coalition of Small Businesses
Huerta Del Valle
IE Community News
Inland Empire Latino Lawyers Association
Inland Empire Future Leaders Program
Inland Empire Immigrant Youth Collective
Inland Equity Community Land Trust
Ives Torres Foundation - Corona
KVCR IE Latino Voices
Latino Media Collaborative
Latino Network
League of United Latin American Citizens LULAC Riverside
Organización de Líderes Campesinas
San Bernardino Home of Neighborly Services
Spanish Town Heritage
The Key Nonprofit
Unidos Por La Musica
We Are One United

IECF received 110 submissions during the initial application period – many of which represented first-time applicants to the foundation. The CIELO Fund Leadership and Grantmaking Committee comprised of community leaders worked to select the recipients.

The CIELO Fund was **launched in 2022** as a Signature Fund celebrating the Foundation's 80th Anniversary. The CIELO Fund's mission is to uplift and invest in organizations, initiatives and ideas that are led by – and serve – Latinos in the Inland Empire. Regional Latino leaders who make up the Leadership and Grantmaking Committee have raised more than \$1 million to jumpstart the effort within its first two years. Over 300 foundations, companies, colleges, universities, organizations, and individuals have supported the CIELO Fund directly.

"IECF is honored to help build up the capacity of Latino led and serving organizations who are central to the fabric of our communities, serving our youth, our seniors, our small businesses and so much more," said **IECF CEO Michelle Decker**. "We are going to continue growing CIELO to serve our region. Together, we are growing giving and moving the inland Empire forward with compassion and fairness."

For more information or to donate to the CIELO Fund, visit www.iegives.org/cielofund

Founded in 1941, the Inland Empire Community Foundation is the oldest and largest community foundation in Inland Southern California. We partner with individuals, families and corporations to build a culture of philanthropy. Since inception, we have given out over \$159 million in grants and scholarships. For more information visit the IECF's website at www.iegives.org. Be a part of our conversation on Facebook, Instagram, Twitter and LinkedIn.