



## **Alianza NORCO: Final Report for Larimer County Immediate Needs Grant**

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To the Staff of Larimer County,

Alianza NORCO would like to express our deep appreciation for the Immediate Needs Grant from Larimer County. This grant helped us continue our growth as a grassroots non-profit. In the past two years, we have expanded the scope of our services and we have seen a dramatic increase in the number of clients we can assist. Our staff has grown from two members in 2021 to eight in 2023 and our operating budget has nearly quintupled. The Immediate Needs Grant was instrumental in this growth.

First, we would like to reintroduce ourselves to any reader who may not know of us. Alianza NORCO is a grassroots nonprofit founded and led by a Salvadoran immigrant with a majority immigrant team. Founded in 2017, our goal is to work in partnership with multi-ethnic allies and pro-immigrant groups to break down the obstacles we face as immigrants and empower our communities to change the systems that oppress us. Our mission is to strengthen our immigrant community members and their families through key services, resource navigation, community organization, civic education, and leadership development. We strive to affect change and advocate for immigrant rights at local, state, and national levels to increase immigrant safety, social cohesion, and civic engagement. Our approach to implementing direct service programs and community organizing centers on the voices of our immigrant community to create and provide service programs, policy, and processes. We provide immigration legal services, bilingual navigation services, civic education to increase immigrant engagement, and assistance for SB13-251 driver's licenses. These are complicated processes that many immigrants struggle with.

Historically, immigrants have suffered from lack of access to governmental and non-governmental services at the local, state and federal levels. In the last six years, immigrants faced worsening conditions as anti-immigrant sentiment swept across the country and we saw a devastating negative shift in international and domestic immigration policy. Three years ago, the COVID-19 pandemic began its rampage of infection across our immigrant population, many of

whom are essential frontline workers. Locally, the impacts of these two events were: reduced economic opportunities, worsening mental and physical health, decreased legal services, and a lack of upward mobility for our immigrant population.

The Larimer Immediate Needs Grant helped fund our Bilingual Navigation Program staff's work, primarily in the form of salary reimbursement. Our Navigation Program provides bilingual, culturally informed navigation to documented and undocumented people. We provide guidance for Colorado driver's licenses through the SB13-251 program, notary services, passport appointments, rent assistance, ITIN/tax preparation, and referrals for power of attorney forms and family law. All of these services are critical for our community members. The guidance that we provide for driver's licenses gives essential agricultural, construction, health aid and service workers access to reliable transportation and promotes safer drivers on our roads. During the height of the COVID pandemic, we adapted to provide virtual navigation to increase our undocumented community's access to COVID relief, providing direct grants and application assistance to over 400 immigrants. The pandemic exacerbated the already-fragile economy of many in our immigrant community. As of April 2023, we have four staff members working on our Navigation program with our Executive Direct program assisting and providing oversight on the program.

## **Numbers**

- a. In 2021 and 2022, our navigation team worked with over 965 clients. This number still takes us aback! We are proud of the number of clients we have guided, many of whom continue to spread the word about our services and get involved in our work;
- b. We were able to provide direct financial assistance to over 400 immigrants.

## **Community Events**

We hosted and participated in multiple in person and virtual events supporting community needs and integration in 2021 and 2022. These events included:

1. 5/27/2021, Virtual Driver's License Workshop for undocumented community members – attended by ~ 20 people
2. 7/17/2021, Community Outreach Event and Fundraiser in person at a local park, 120,

3. 10/2/2021, Immigration Townhall – In-person event to educate our community about immigration policy’s history and current status, as well as ways to get involved in changing these laws - attended by ~ people.
4. 10/23/21 - In-person Informative Community Outreach event at Greeley’s Multicultural Festival. ~200 people attended.
5. 10/29/21 - Day of the Dead altar at Aztlan Community Center honoring the lives of prominent Latinos who had passed away from COVID-19, and which helped us distribute information about this virus and its impact on our community.
6. 11/6/21- Community-wide Day of the Dead celebration at the Gardens on Spring Creek and distributed information in Spanish about vaccine clinics, upcoming events, and our services ~ 150 attended
7. 11/02/21 - Advance Directives with the Poudre River Public Library and the Health District of Larimer County - In person community outreach.
8. 11/8/21 - Virtual Citizenship Info Night about the eligibility requirements and benefits of citizenship. In collaboration with Lutheran Family Services Rocky Mountain Immigration Legal Services.
9. 11/14/21 - Fort Collins Community Meeting – In person at the Boys and Girls Club - ~120 people attended.
10. 11/15/21 - In-person Domestic Violence Workshop for Spanish-speaking Immigrant community members. In collaboration with Homeward Alliance, SAVA, and Crossroads Shelter. ~30 people attended.
11. 1/20/22 - 2022 Tax Season and Driver’s Licenses – Virtual community outreach event to inform about free tax preparation with a Spanish-speaking tax preparer for community members who qualify for VITA’s services – ~25 people attended.
12. 1/27/22 - Virtual Community meeting on Licenses and the 2021-22 Child Tax Credit ~ 84 people attended. In collaboration with CBOCES of Greeley.
13. 1/24/22 - Virtual Info Night on the US Asylum Process – ~18 people attended
14. 2/17/22 - Virtual Info Night - All about the ITIN tax identification number for Immigrants and info on Driver’s licenses – ~25 people attended
15. 2/23/22 - Virtual Info Night - All about Tax Preparation and Driver’s Licenses – ~20 people attended.
16. 2/25/22 - Virtual Driver’s License Presentation ~35 people attended
17. 3/23/22 - In-Person driving License Presentation at the Poudre High school ~50 newcomer students attended
18. 3/30/22 - In-person driving License Presentation at the Fort Collins High School ~50 newcomer students attended
19. 4/15/22 - In-person Informative Community Outreach event & DMV Celebration with access to Mobile vaccine clinic in Greeley. ~30 people attended.

20. 4/21/22 - Virtual Citizenship Info Night – two people attended to hear about the eligibility requirements and benefits of citizenship. In collaboration with Lutheran Family Services Rocky Mountain Immigration Legal Services
21. 4/23/22 - Community Outreach Event at Harmony Mobile Home Park in collaboration with the City of Fort Collins. ~30 people attended.
22. 5/14/2022 - Immigrant rights and Resources from 12 - 4pm at the Boys and Girls Club in Fort Collins ~40 attended
23. 6/30/22 - Advanced Care Planning and SB251 Driver's Licenses ~18 attended
24. 8/20/22 - Homeward Alliance Family Resource Fair ~12 signed up for navigation assistance
25. 9/16/2022- Independence Day at Los Muertos
26. 9/20/2022- Homeward Alliance Resource Fair - share resources
27. 9/23/2022- Housing Resources / Drivers Licenses Wrokshop by Alianza NORCO and neighbor to Neighbor
28. 10/2/2022- Community Rights and Resources Clinic - Event with ISAAC, Fuerza Latina, Library at the Senior Center 11:30 am –3:30 pm
29. 10/25/22- Pizza Party Voting Info
30. 11/14/2022- Domestic Violence and U Visas and VAWA
31. 12/23/2022 Housing Resources to Newcomers with Neighbor to Neighbor, Alianza NORCO, and FL

### **Testimonials and Stories:**

(The names below have been replaced with pseudonyms for confidentiality.)

Susana:

Susana is from Guatemala. During her journey to the US, her boyfriend was shot and killed. She eventually crossed the border but did not want to continue living. Years later, she was able to move on from that horrific experience. She married and had a miracle baby, her son, something she thought was medically impossible. Now living in Fort Collins, she was seeking safety and security when she contacted us to help with her driver's license, although this too was a battle. I helped her make unexpected payments for not having passed the written exam the first time and made additional appointments when she didn't understand why they had turned her away. Eventually we were successful, and she now confirms that having a license gives her day-to-day security when she drives her little son. Her family was also affected by the pandemic when she lost her old job and struggled to make ends meet.

This last year we met a single mom who was getting her license through our navigation services. During the process, our navigators found out that she was working three jobs to repair her water-damaged roof and kitchen, which was non-functional. Her children were struggling with school and mental health problems during the pandemic. We helped her with rent assistance, raised funds and organized our immigrant community to help repair her mobile home, connected her and her children to mental health resources, and helped obtain her driver's license. Our work transformed her life for the better and confirmed our commitment to bridging our community to other nonprofits.

"I am very grateful for the service that Alianza NORCO gave me and that they still continue to help me with the process of obtaining my driver's license. I don't feel very safe driving like this without a license, but when you have a family, you have to deal with it because you have no choice but to take risks and do it. But I know that when I have my license, this will make me feel safer driving on the streets and I will not be so afraid that a police officer will stop me and give me a ticket for driving without a license. This will also help me to reduce the cost of my insurance and the level of stress in which I live every day will be reduced a little more in my life."

We look forward to continued partnership with Larimer County as we work together to support and work alongside our immigrant community.

With deep gratitude,

Sara Kane and the Alianza NORCO team