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Latino Giving Circle Awards \$35,000 in Grants, Stands with Migrant and Immigrant Communities

The *2025 Nuestra Comunidad Grant Awards*, hosted during Hispanic Heritage Month by the [Latino Giving Circle](#) of Rochester Area Community Foundation, celebrated Latino community, culture, giving — and \$35,625 in grants to meet the community's evolving needs.

Latino communities in the region are navigating urgent challenges: immigration policy shifts, rising food insecurity, barriers to healthcare and housing, and ongoing inequities in education and employment.

At the same time, Latinos are leading innovative solutions that build resilience and opportunity. These grants provide timely support to sustain and expand that work — meeting immediate needs while strengthening pathways to opportunity and empowerment.

This year, Latino Giving Circle members were eager to step up and bolster organizations whose focus on diversity, equity, and inclusion resulted in the loss of critical funding. Three of the Circle's eight grantees are providing services to our community's immigrants and migrants.

One grantee, the **Western NY Coalition of Farmworkers Serving Agencies**, prepares immigrant families for emergency situations, offering caregivers information on how to protect their children with legal guardianship plans and how to quickly get access to trusted legal support. These programs aim to ease some of the fear that these families face on a daily basis.

A grant to **Ibero-American Action League** will support their annual *State of the Latino Community* event, which shares data and insights with around 200 attendees so that efforts to improve education, health, employment, and housing remain rooted in lived experience and community need. The event addresses pressing topics such as public safety and immigration.



JustCause, a volunteer legal services organization, received support to better meet the high demand for immigration legal services in our region. Their programs help people overcome financial and linguistic barriers that might otherwise stand in the way of securing lawful status, family reunification, and protection from deportation.

Other grants awarded through the Circle broadly support the Latino community in areas like food assistance, language access, and health.

The Latino Giving Circle, founded in 2022, has awarded grants to dozens of organizations that uplift Latino voices, advance equity, and build opportunities across our region. Through its network of members, the Circle leverages collective giving to improve the quality of life in our community.

A steering committee made up of local community members reviewed applications and recommended projects to the Circle's voting members for approval. From an initial pool of 15 applications, eight organizations were awarded grants.

"Every grant sends a clear message to our Latino community," says Yolanda Rios, co-chair of the Latino Giving Circle. "Our people are essential, our culture is beautiful, our future is bright."

When funding decisions are made by members of the community itself, the process honors cultural insight and lived realities that outside funders might overlook. By funding "from within," the Circle affirms the dignity, leadership, and potential of Latino communities.

"The Latino Giving Circle is rooted in *nuestra comunidad* — pooling resources, knowledge, and trust to ensure that grantmaking is not only charitable but transformative," says Dawn Perry, the Community Foundation's collective giving officer.

Photos: 2025 Latino Giving Circle grantees: <https://www.racf.org/wp-content/uploads/2025/09/LGC-2025-Awards-Grantees.jpg> | 2025 Grant Awards guests: <https://www.racf.org/wp-content/uploads/2025/09/LGC-2025-Awards-Guests.jpg>

About the Latino Giving Circle

The Latino Giving Circle, part of Rochester Area Community Foundation, supports organizations, initiatives, and programs created by and for the Latino community to meet their needs and empower Latinos in the greater Rochester area.



About Rochester Area Community Foundation

In partnership with generous philanthropists and community partners, Rochester Area Community Foundation works to improve the quality of life for people who live and work in the eight-county region through its leadership and strategic grantmaking. As a leading grantmaker, the Foundation is focused on two broad goals: creating an equitable community and strengthening our region's vitality. Since 1972, the Community Foundation has distributed more than \$740 million in grants and scholarships.

2025 Grantees

Ibero-American Action League: The annual *State of the Latino Community* event convenes 200+ attendees — including policymakers, experts, and community member — for data-driven discussions on education, health, employment, and housing, ensuring strategies remain rooted in lived experience and community need.

Western NY Coalition of Farmworker Serving Agencies: Through rapid-response legal aid, Know Your Rights workshops, and emergency preparedness planning, the Coalition equips immigrant families — 77% of whom identify as Latino — with tools to prevent separation and access education, healthcare, and legal support.

Community Food Cupboard of Rochester: By employing a Spanish-speaking staff member, the Food Cupboard removes language barriers for thousands of Latino neighbors facing food insecurity.

Volunteer Legal Services Project (JustCause): The Immigration Legal Services Assistance Fund reduces financial barriers for Latino families by covering filing fees, translation, and travel costs — helping secure lawful status, family reunification, and protection from deportation.

Hobart and William Smith Colleges – Geneva 2030: The Geneva Language Access Project expands bilingual tutoring, interpretation, and translation for Latino families, increasing participation in schools and community events while building a pool of trained interpreters.

HCR Cares: *Proyecto Éxito para Enfermería* provides scholarships and mentorship for Latina Home Health Aides pursuing nursing and allied health degrees, removing barriers like childcare and textbooks to strengthen workforce diversity and cultural competence.

Strong Recovery – Recuperación Fuerte: *Sobriedad y Salud Fuerte* delivers bilingual, group-based mental health and substance use treatment for Latino adults, fostering recovery, emotional healing, and community support rooted in culture and language.

Coordinated Care Services – Our Local History: To expand its civil rights curriculum to include diverse Latinx histories, engaging students and educators in understanding Puerto Rican, Dominican, Mexican, Cuban, and other immigrant contributions to Rochester's growth and civic life.