

Hispanic Heritage Month Project Spotlight Pt. 1



by Grace Frye, Senior Associate of
Provider Network Engagement

Each year from September 15 – October 15, we recognize and celebrate National Hispanic Heritage Month. This year we will shine a spotlight on our incredible providers and partner organizations who work to build an equitable future in education for Hispanic and

Latino communities. Over the course of the next few weeks, we will use this space to elevate the work of some of our partners and providers working directly within the Latinx community. For part two of this series, [click here](#).

ALL in Education and Dayna Cobarrubias

This June, we saw the completion of a unique Strategic Plan for National and Individual Fundraising by in-network provider [Dayna Cobarrubias](#) for Phoenix-based partner [ALL In Education](#). We spoke with Stephanie Parra, Executive Director of ALL In Education, and Dayna about the importance of this project, centering equity in work and amplifying Latino voices across education.

The Partner

Arizona Latino Leaders In Education, or ALL In Education, is an advocacy organization that seeks to build an Arizona where no child is at risk of falling behind, where parents feel valued and supported, and most importantly, where ALL kids feel loved and honored in their classrooms. =

“Our core belief is that until Latinos have power, influence, and authority at all levels of education—from students to working families, teachers to administrators, school board members to governing officials, making final decisions, influencing policy, and investing real capital—while collectively holding leaders accountable to creating access to opportunity and justice for Latino students and families, the gap in Latino attainment will never end,” Stephanie says.

ALL In Education currently offers three programs: 1) the [Parent Educator Academy](#), which is an introductory leadership development program for caregivers that want to strengthen their skills to better support the educational journey of their students; 2) the [Adelante Fellowship](#), a 10-month program for next-generation education, advocacy, and policy leaders in Arizona; and 3) the [Leaders In Support of Transformational Opportunities \(LISTO\) academy](#), a leadership development program that works with Latino and values-based leaders who are ready to serve in local and state education and organization governing board positions

The Provider

Dayna Cobarrubias got her start in education at the Posse Foundation, a national college access program, followed by 15 years at Teach For America (TFA), where she honed her skills and passion for fundraising and strategy.

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"While at TFA I realized that two of my passions and strengths were being able to merge strategy with fundraising—really thinking through fundraising strategic plans," Dayna said. "There is always a consistent need for fundraising and I wanted to be able to expand the opportunity to be a resource to other organizations—to be able to provide that additional capacity and support them and in creating the infrastructure and the foundation to fulfill their missions."

Dayna says that her experience navigating the fundraising world and using that knowledge to support other leaders of color is a major component of her work.

"The fundraising space is a very white space," she explains. "I feel like I've had to navigate a lot of white spaces as a Latinx woman in order to effectively raise money. I feel like I have an obligation or responsibility to be able to use that experience to inform and support other leaders of color who also have to navigate that space and are creating new strategies for how to not only do that, but also think beyond that and raise funds and investment from the actual community that they're serving."

The Project

ALL in Education came to Catalyst:Ed through the NewSchools Venture Fund Diverse Leaders exchange with a unique goal: to build a strategic plan for national and individual fundraising that acknowledges the importance of independence in constructing the ALL In Education vision.

"At ALL In Education we believe that in order to build real sustainability and influence in our communities, we must ensure that Latinos are not only at the table, but also making decisions and driving efforts that impact our communities," Stephanie says. "We are focused on doing this by building a network of supporters that have vested interest in our efforts and goals."

To avoid losing independence to a small group of large dollar donors, ALL In Education has launched a Communities Investing in Education Network (CIEn) initiative that asks 100 Arizona Latino leaders to publicly support their power-building efforts by donating \$1,000 and becoming a part of CIEn.

"Latinos are among the fastest growing demographic population in Arizona, and ALL In Education wants to ensure that we are engaging them through multiple levels of our work and the education system," Stephanie adds.

"Through our work with Catalyst:Ed, we are continuing to build on a plan to create a network of Latino influencers that can elevate the importance of education in our communities."

Aside from local donors, ALL In Education also has partnerships with larger funders like NewSchools Venture Fund and the Education Leaders of Color Boulder Fund. As they continue their high growth trajectory, ALL In Education needed guidance and support to increase their fundraising from both local and national streams.

"I was excited about this opportunity because I felt like it aligned with my skill, but I was also specifically drawn to the organization's focus on serving Latinx students and the Latinx community in Arizona," Dayna says. "That community has a special place in my heart, and you don't see a lot of organizations that are specifically led by individuals who show the backgrounds of students specifically in the Latinx community. I really wanted to support that mission and ensure that I could do whatever I could to provide any skills or knowledge or capacity building that would set the organization up for success long term."

“Our core belief is that until Latinos have power, influence, and authority at all levels of education—from students to working families, teachers to administrators, school board members to governing officials, making final decisions, influencing policy, and investing real capital—while collectively holding leaders accountable to creating access to opportunity and justice for Latino students and families, the gap in Latino attainment will never end.” – Stephanie Parra, Executive Director of ALL In Education

The Outcomes

Finding the right provider through the Catalyst:Ed scoping and project matching process was an important piece of the puzzle for ALL in Education. Organization leadership needed to find a consultant with a fundraising background, specific experience with individual donor strategy, and someone who deeply understands the mission behind ALL In Education.

“It was extremely important [to find a provider with a Latino background] as it allowed us to work with an individual that understood our needs and challenges but more so had a great grasp of our work and goals,” Stephanie says. “Working with a provider that truly understands our needs, goals, and challenges allowed for this experience to be incredibly valuable.”

Dayna agrees.

“For any type of equity movement or reform movement to work, there needs to be perspectives at all levels that are influenced by folks who share that background. And especially in education. To have providers that are helping to solve those challenges that also share these backgrounds and can share their own perspectives, I think it really matters,” she said.

At the end of the project, Dayna built a three-year funding plan that outlined key fundraising strategies, identified potential prospects, and identified connection opportunities to those prospects based on ALL In Education’s existing network.

“This project allowed us to better organize our fundraising efforts and plan through a solid strategy and solutions to ensure that we are tracking our fundraising – both institutional and individual – in ways that will maximize our growth and potential,” Stephanie explains. “We have seen immediate success in helping us understand where our funding gaps are so that we can place our time and resources to ensure that we are targeting the donors and funders we want.”

“One thing I really loved about the organization was this idea around prioritizing engaging community support, specifically from building a base of individual support from Latinx leaders in the community. To be able to see this organization also prioritizing building a base of both grassroots and grasstops support is really powerful. To have that focus not only on serving Latino students and families, but also engaging Latino philanthropy, I think is unique and important,” Dayna adds.

At the core of this Latino-led organization is centering Latino voices, experiences, and outcomes. Stephanie says one way they’re able to make the most impact as a Latino focused education non-profit has been “our

willingness and commitment to being fiercely independent.”

“This means that our organization exists to serve our communities – we do not play favorites or do favors. We always operate with a community and student-centric lens. The work we do must always be to ensure that we are creating a long-lasting impact for our communities.”

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