



**FOUNDATION OF
LITTLE VILLAGE**

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Foundation of Little Village Releases 2023 Annual Report Showcasing Community Impact

The report highlights the organization's impact and success stories of entrepreneurs who completed the nonprofit's free Juntos entrepreneurial programming

July 17, 2024 (LITTLE VILLAGE) – The Foundation of Little Village has released its 2023 Annual Report that showcases the impact of the organization and highlights success stories of entrepreneurs who completed the Foundation of Little Village Juntos Programming, culturally relevant and bilingual entrepreneurial classes.

“Alongside our generous supporters, funders, and community leaders, the Foundation of Little Village is working every day to support and celebrate our community’s entrepreneurs, culture, and traditions,” said Daniel Arce, President of Sun Optics and Board President of the Foundation of Little Village. “We’re excited to release our 2023 Annual Report to showcase the meaningful work our team has completed in the past year and the impact it has had on our community’s entrepreneurs.”

The 2023 Annual Report is a demonstration of how the Foundation of Little Village, alongside its strategic partnerships in the Xquina Business Ecosystem, empowers aspiring entrepreneurs to turn their dreams into reality. The report highlights the success and growth of the Foundation of Little Village as well as the current and emerging entrepreneurs the nonprofit serves. The Foundation of Little Village celebrates the journeys and milestones of entrepreneurs and is inspired by their transformations that ultimately contribute to the creation of community wealth, cultural preservation, and revitalization of the Little Village corridor.

“The Foundation of Little Village focuses on three core pillars: community wealth building, cultural preservation, and revitalization of the Little Village corridor,” said Kim Close, executive director of the Foundation of Little Village. “Our impact starts with empowering local entrepreneurs to turn their dreams into reality and invest back into our community and extends to securing grants that are used to preserve the community’s unique culture and invest in local entrepreneurs.”

In 2023, more than 80 entrepreneurs completed the Foundation of Little Village’s entrepreneurial educational programs, and of those participants, 89% acknowledged that their businesses were strengthened after completing the programming. The programs – Juntos Avanzamos, Juntos Lanzamos, and Juntos Emprendemos – focus on delivering business training, technical assistance, and business coaching to current and emerging entrepreneurs. Juntos programs are offered at no cost to participants and underscore the nonprofit’s dedication to empowering emerging entrepreneurs, fostering economic growth, and encouraging development from within the Little Village community.



“Through the programs offered by the Foundation of Little Village, I found valuable resources and connections that complemented my business plan,” said Tania Hernandez Martinez, Owner of Chill and Go Products and Juntos Lanzamos and Juntos Emprendemos graduate. “The experience of engaging in these programs was instrumental in reinforcing and refining the strategies I had already implemented in my business, providing me with a space for ongoing improvement.”

The Juntos programming is an important piece of the Foundation’s Xquina Business Ecosystem, which is the umbrella that encompasses the business resources the Foundation of Little Village provides to current and emerging entrepreneurs. The Xquina Business Ecosystem is a network of strategic local partnerships that links entrepreneurs to solution sets that provide critical services from mentorships and fiscal agents to micro-grant programs and business and technical programs. Another important element of the Xquina Business ecosystem is the 13,000 square foot cultural community hub Xquina Incubator & Café, which is planned to open in 2024.

“We had a very strong year in 2023, and we’re very excited about the growth of our programming but also our community’s entrepreneurs,” said Lisandra Martinez, Juntos Instructor and Mentor Manager. “I’m always inspired by the passion, resilience, and determination that each and every one of our entrepreneurs exhibits. I take great pride in watching them walk at graduation and seeing the smiles and confidence on their face knowing they’re well-equipped to strengthen their business. These entrepreneurs really are a reflection of our community, and there is a bright future ahead for Little Village.”

Please visit flvchicago.org to view the full report, which also includes highlights of Juntos program graduates to showcase how the Foundation of Little Village impacts individuals. Below is a summary of the 2023 Annual Report by the numbers:

- Juntos Programming served more than 80 participants
 - 93% of participants are satisfied or very satisfied with the programming
 - 89% of participants believe their businesses were strengthened after participating in Juntos Programming
 - 85% of participants are female
 - 67% of participants prefer Spanish to English
 - Average age of participants is 44 years old
- Juntos Lanzamos (Spanish): 45 participants
 - 2 cohorts with 17 total graduates
 - 24 total mentorship hours
- Juntos Lanzamos (English): 15 participants
 - 1 cohort with 12 total graduates
 - 7 total mentorship hours
- Juntos Emprendemos: 27 participants
 - 2 cohorts with 20 graduates
 - 36.5 total mentorship hours
- Juntos Avanzamos: 7 participants
 - 1 cohort with 7 graduates
 - 13 total mentorship hours



- \$16,500 awarded to 6 Juntos Avanzamos graduates

Learn more about the Foundation of Little Village or enroll in its entrepreneurial Juntos programming at flvchicago.org.

About the Foundation of Little Village

The Foundation of Little Village was founded in August 2018 with a mission to create a socioeconomic impact system for Little Village entrepreneurs. In this time, the Foundation of Little Village has supported more than 250 local small businesses with culturally relevant educational programming, professional services, workforce training, access to capital, and technical assistance to bridge the digital divide between youth and local businesses. In pursuit of these goals, the Foundation of Little Village equips local entrepreneurs with access to bilingual, professional programming designed to support and encourage economic growth, educational opportunities, and vibrant wealth creation to more effectively propel the Little Village community forward.