

UNIDOS

ANNUAL REPORT
unidoswi.org

2023



Dear friend,

Thank you for sharing with us on our journey as a community dedicated to supporting individuals and families affected by domestic abuse, human trafficking and sexual violence in Dane County, WI. We continue to be committed to our mission of empowering the community to break the cycle of domestic abuse, end sexual assault, and promote healthy family systems.

We carry our values to service, compassion, collaboration, and social justice in our work with the community. Guided by our mission and fueled by the unwavering dedication of our volunteers, staff, and supporters, we have continued to uplift, empower, and inspire those in need, even in the face of unprecedented challenges.

In 2023, we provided over 15,000 hours of free, confidential, bilingual programming and support to close to two thousand people. We gave out close to \$50,000 in emergency aid to victims fleeing abuse, accompanied 200+ survivors to court, hosted our first in person community event since the pandemic, and relaunched our support group for individuals identifying as male.

We also worked tirelessly on strengthening our internal capacity and focused on extending our partnerships in the community to best respond to the growing needs of those affected by domestic abuse and sexual violence. We provided resources, advocacy, and support and took an active role in raising awareness on pressing social issues that affect us all.

Yet, our work is far from finished. As we look to the future with hope, we are reminded of the immense challenges ahead and the urgent need for continued collective action and solidarity. We know that we can only overcome these challenges together, with a continued commitment to justice, equality, and human dignity.

Thank you for your continued support and partnership as you strive each day to build a more just, inclusive, and compassionate world for all. UNIDOS, we can build a brighter tomorrow for our community and all.



Sinceramente,

Virginia Gittens Escudero

Virginia Gittens Escudero, Executive Director

MISSION

Empower the community to break the cycle of domestic violence, end sexual assault, and promote healthy family systems.



VALUES

Social justice

Respect human dignity and promote social equity.

Education

Provide safe venues to dismantle myths about domestic and sexual violence.

Empowerment

Support victims/survivors to seek community-driven solutions to end violence.

Collaboration

Build a strong coalition of victims, survivors and allies.



ABOUT US

UNIDOS was started in 1996 as a group of volunteers committed to helping Latine survivors of domestic violence (DV) access local services.

The organization started as a result of social action research conducted with migrant farm worker communities in central Wisconsin in the 90s. **This early research indicated that, although DV was a serious problem within the Latine migrant and immigrant community, local DV services did not have the resources to work with Latine victims.** Staff from local agencies needed assistance to learn about their culture and how the problem of DV was uniquely experienced by our community.

To that end, UNIDOS has become a leader around the state as a resource for training and technical assistance to a variety of agencies around the state working with Latine victims and survivors. In 2001, UNIDOS Against Domestic Violence became a 501(c)(3), not-for-profit agency.

Today, UNIDOS supports hundreds of survivors and their families in Dane County and beyond. UNIDOS also provides statewide education and technical assistance to colleagues and professionals who wish to improve their services to Latines in Wisconsin.

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Will Hutter, Board President
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Gabiella Gaus, Secretary
Leslie Jump
Nela Kalpic
Nicole Sandoval
Sara Santana



PROGRAMS & SERVICES



La Red Helpline

Our 24-hour bilingual and confidential helpline provides support, crisis intervention, safety planning, referrals to other community resources, and information for survivors and anyone seeking support and information about domestic violence and sexual assault.



General Support Advocates

Our advocates provide individualized support and information to anyone affected by recent or past domestic violence or sexual assault. This includes providing general information, explaining a victim's legal rights, assessing and responding to a crisis (safety planning, basic needs, etc.), supporting survivors' mental health, assisting families navigating the welfare system, connecting survivors to community resources, and much more.



Legal Advocates

Many survivors become involved with the legal system after their victimization. Our legal advocates work directly with case workers, attorneys and government authorities to provide culturally sensitive support and guidance to victims navigating the legal justice system after an assault. Advocates help report assaults, assist with filing of temporary restraining orders, and accompany victims to court hearings.





2023

PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS

Integrating economic empowerment into advocacy



Through this new pilot project, funded by A Fund for Women, we are integrating economic empowerment programming into our existing advocacy work for survivors. The project seeks to equip Latina and immigrant survivors with the knowledge, resources, and confidence to financially support themselves and their families in the short- and long-term. The project brings together an enhanced screening process, tailored economic safety plan, community education, and financial education to support the growth of self-efficacy and economic self-sufficiency for Latina survivors.

Improving mental health with art



Art has proven to be a potent tool for fostering empowerment and facilitating recovery from domestic and sexual abuse, particularly within the Latine community. This year, with generous support from the Oscar Rennebohm Foundation, we have expanded our initiatives to offer culturally-sensitive mental health wrap-around support for survivors and their families. Our goal is to enhance their ability to confront and heal from trauma and abuse.

Our programming is bilingual and community-driven, featuring art therapy workshops tailored for survivors, community awareness initiatives, and activities promoting mental and physical wellbeing.

PROGRAMS & SERVICES



Support Groups

We provide survivors with a safe, confidential space for their healing process. Support groups are led in Spanish by trained advocates and aim to lessen the sense of isolation, provide emotional support, and encourage healthy coping strategies. Through peer support, participants help each other overcome feelings of loneliness, frustration, and despair together.



Counseling Services

Survivors may experience short and long-term emotional and psychological effects from abuse, including feelings of confusion or hopelessness, depression, anxiety, panic attacks, and post-traumatic stress disorder. We provide free one-on-one culturally-relevant counseling in Spanish to survivors who complete our intake process.



Prevention and Outreach

We engage in culturally relevant outreach to build awareness about domestic violence, sexual assault, and human trafficking. Programs include presentations and tabling at community events and gatherings, a monthly radio program, and events and marketing campaigns designed to raise awareness in a manner that is culturally relevant to the Latine community.



STAFF

Virginia Gittens

Executive Director

Lucia Ledesma

Associate Director

Sindya Cardona

Domestic Violence Advocate

Fatima Macias

Youth Advocate Coordinator

Tania Hernandez

Administrative Assistant

Jhonatan Real

Help Line Supervisor

Katie Williams

Legal Advocate

Fanya Valencia

Sexual Assault Advocate

LA RED STAFF

Manuel Cerda

Lisette Serrano

Nancy Gomez

Gisea Tlahuextl

Lori Nelson

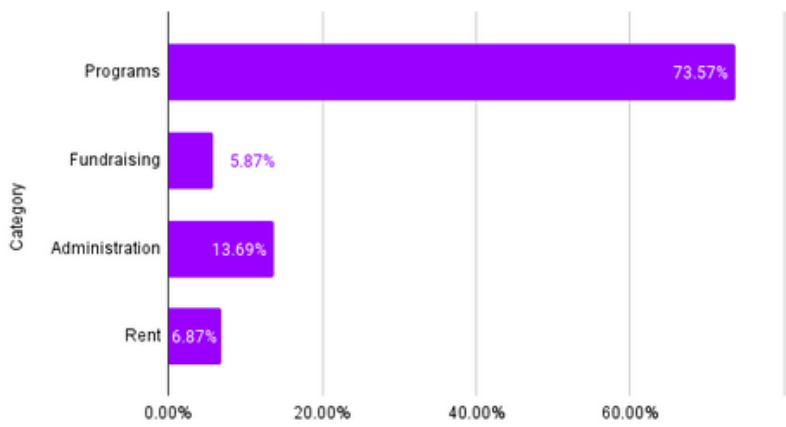
Juan Valencia

Lindbergh Rodriguez

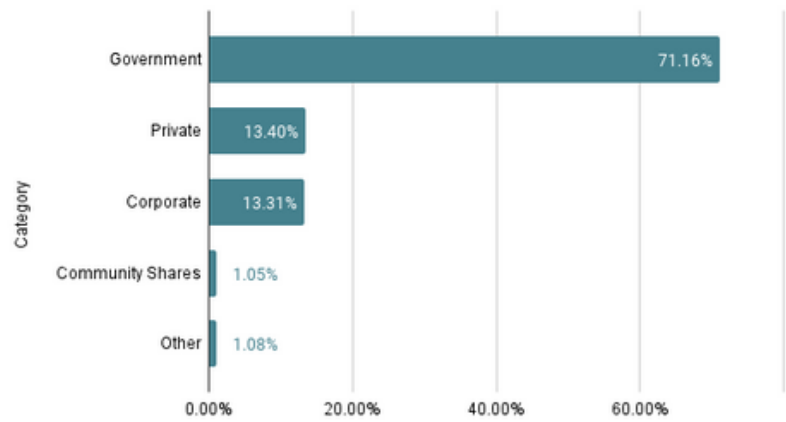


INCOME & EXPENSE STATEMENT

Expenses



Revenue





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2005 W BELTLINE HWY STE 211

Fitchburg WI 53713

