

34th Annual



Enfócate, Edúcate, Participa:

Focus, Learn, Participate:

The Future is in our Hands!

Integrating change and community resources for all.



DCFS LATINO ADVISORY COUNCIL **FAMILY INSTITUTE DAY**

AN ONLINE VIRTUAL EVENT



FRIDAY, OCTOBER 14, 2022

SPONSORED BY THE ILLINOIS DEPARTMENT OF CHILDREN AND FAMILY SERVICES
IN COLLABORATION WITH THE LATINO ADVISORY COUNCIL

Marc D. Smith, DCFS Director

Daniel L. Fitzgerald, Chief of the Office of Diversity, Equity and Inclusion

José Javier López, Chief of Latino Services

Yeni Rojas, Chairperson of the DCFS Latino Advisory Council

Julia Monzón, Chairperson of the Latino Family Institute Day

Rebecca L. Sherrick, President, Aurora University

Rico Mangram, The Rico No Suave Show, Master of Ceremonies

Illinois Department of
DCFS
Children & Family Services

SAFETY  **SAFETY**
FIRST ALWAYS



October 14, 2022

¡Bienvenidos!

Welcome to the Illinois Department of Children and Family Services' 34th Annual Latino Advisory Council Family Institute Day. DCFS is proud of its continued collaboration with the Latino Advisory Council, its executive committee and this year's educational partner, Aurora University School of Social Work.

The theme for this year's Institute Day is ***Enfócate, Edúcate, Participa: The Future is in our Hands! Integrating Change and Community Resources for All.*** Today you will have the opportunity to choose workshops covering a variety of topics that were thoughtfully selected for you to walk away with additional knowledge, awareness and inspiration to strengthen your approach to serving children and families. These Institute Days are developed to complement skills you already possess, but also provide new strategies and tools that will support the important role we play in interacting with our children and families.

The Latino Advisory Council is comprised of DCFS staff and our private agency partners who understand the specific needs of Latino families and are culturally aware of the youth and families we serve. I am very proud of the hard work they put into presenting the Latino Family Institute Day year after year. This event is a true reflection of my vision and commitment to shaping DCFS into a department fully responsive to the needs of all children and families, no matter their cultural background.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Marc D. Smith". The signature is fluid and cursive.

Marc D. Smith, Director

Illinois Department of Children and Family Services



¡Bienvenidos! / Welcome!

On behalf of the Diversity, Equity and Inclusion's Latino Services Office, I welcome you to the 34th Annual Latino Family Institute Day being coordinated by the DCFS Director's Latino Advisory Council. The Latino Advisory Council has been constantly addressing issues during the year affecting our Latino families and children. Our theme this year:

***Enfócate, Educate, Participa; The Future is in our Hands!
Integrating Change and Community Resources for All***

Given the ongoing pandemic we are again meeting virtually this year. The training being provided during this institute was selected to address issues field staff face and the need to re-focus, and take a look at the resources available to us. The work the Director's Latino Advisory Council does is very important and if you are interested in joining the Latino Advisory Council, please let us know. Membership is open to both POS and DCFS field staff. You will be provided with resources electronically from our vendors during the Institute Day and they will be emailed after the training.

I want to thank Aurora University's School of Social Work for partnering with us this year and assisting us in hosting the Virtual Institute Day. I also want to thank our Latino Advisory Council's Coordinating Committee for their hard work in making this Training Institute possible.

Thank you,

José Javier López

Chief

Office of Latino Services

DCFS Office of Diversity, Equity and Inclusion





Bienvenidos/Welcome!

On behalf of the Latino Advisory Council and Aurora University, we are welcoming all of you to our 34th Annual Latino Family Institute Day: ***Enfócate, Edúcate, Participa: The Future is in our Hands! Integrating Change and Community Resources for All.***

The Latino Advisory Council is honored and happy to present a day of great learning experiences including our keynote speaker, cultural presentation, and informational workshops as part of our evolving practices. Also, to celebrate 34 years of accomplishments, challenges, collective work, dedication, accountability, and advocacy.

As we celebrate each other, I would like to take this opportunity to invite our DCFS and POS colleagues to get involved and join the Latino Advisory Council and support the commitment we have to represent and advocate on behalf of the Latino children, youth, and families we serve as well as promoting professional development practices.

I would like to give special thanks to Aurora University, Office of Professional Development, Office of Communications, LAC-Latino Institute Planning Committee, IDCFS, POS, community colleges for the ongoing collaborative partnership and everyone who made this event possible.

Yeni Rojas

Regional Administrator
Intact Family Services of Cook and Northern Regions
Latino Advisory Council Chairperson

"The beauty of the world lies in the diversity of its people."



14 October 2022



¡Bienvenido! Welcome!

I am honored to welcome you to the **34th Annual Latino Family Institute Day, “Enfócate, Edúcate, Participa; The Future is in our Hands! Integrating Change and Community Resources for All.”** At Aurora University, we have a long history of partnering with the Department of Children and Family Services to make Illinois better for its youngest residents. We are pleased to co-sponsor today’s important program.

Aurora University is an inclusive community dedicated to the transformative power of learning. For more than two decades, the institution has strengthened its presence within the Latino/Latina community. Today, because of those efforts, AU is recognized by the United States government as a Hispanic-Serving Institution (HSI). We are proud to celebrate diversity and to serve as a national model for private universities.

Many students from primarily Spanish-speaking households achieve their educational goals at AU. We understand the crucial role that families play in our students’ success, and so we make special efforts to ensure that our students feel at home within the AU community. We acknowledge the cultural ties and family values that are essential ingredients to college and professional success.

Our School of Social Work is particularly proud to have partnered with DCFS to create a child welfare track of study in 2007. The DCFS Foundation Curriculum is infused throughout the child welfare-related Bachelor of Social Work (BSW) and Masters of Social Work (MSW) campus-based and online courses. Our program allows graduates to prepare for the Child Welfare Licensing examination and to engage in life-changing work.

We are proud and grateful for our longstanding relationship with DCFS. Our two organizations share much in common, including a willingness to embrace change and to move forward in progressive ways. We value relationships and community and seek always to serve the needs of all. At AU, we are grateful to prepare many graduates for meaningful careers as work-ready child welfare professionals.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Rebecca L. Sherrick". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Rebecca L. Sherrick, PhD
President



Dear Advocates,

It is an honor to collaborate with the DCFS Latino Advisory Council and the School of Social Work at Aurora University in hosting this year's Latino Family Institute Day. On behalf of the Office of Latino/a Student Initiatives, it is my pleasure to accompany all participants in this annual event led by a team of experts who advance the wellbeing of Latino families.

The Office of Latino/a Student Initiatives seeks to keep pace with the evolving Latino professional experience and offers a multifaceted approach to serving the vibrant and multicultural Latino student population. In my role at Aurora

University, I support the almost 45% Latino/a/x/e student population that enrich the campus with an array of strengths from cultural tradition, Latino linguistics, aspirational capital and familial community.

In line with the charge of the DCFS Latino Advisory Council, Aurora University serves many students from primarily Spanish-speaking households by acknowledging each person's unique identity and affirming the cultural and familial values of each student. For many students, Aurora University opens the doors to meaningful self-discovery and engagement across and beyond differences with peers, faculty and staff. Our approach to student success deepens this experience by providing accessibility to life changing resources and doors to ambitious goals that profoundly influence the professional and personal lives of all students and their families.

This year, the Latino Family Institute Day centers on Integrating Change and Resources for All. Many Latino families were impacted and continue to experience challenges left behind by multiple pandemics. The acquisition of knowledge and awareness for uplifting the Latino community has been both rapid and significant. Gathering with advocates like you amplifies the sense of hope and inspiration grounded in proactive expertise and the provision of service for all those entrusted to our care.

I look forward to learning together in partnership with the Latino DCFS personnel for the benefit of all Illinois Latino families.

In gratitude,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Mariza Rocha". The script is fluid and cursive.

Mariza Rocha Gonzalez

Director of Latino/a Student Initiatives
Aurora University

Keynote Speaker



Robert H. Marshall

Robert Marshall is and has been a highly influential and sought-after speaker for over 15 years. He's captivated, challenged, and inspired audiences from around the world to think big, but to dream bigger. His genuine love for people coupled with his unique ability to touch the minds and hearts of those he speaks to is what has set him apart from anyone else. Robert is as transparent as they come as a survivor of fatherlessness, bullying, and sexual abuse he is able to connect and speak to an array of challenges that many face in their daily life. He struggled through traditional high school and had to relocate to an alternative school to graduate, with the support of mentors he was able to graduate early from high school and has now earned multiple degrees in the field of educational leadership.

Robert's passion for helping boys and men achieve healing and personal abundance is powered by his vision to see all people set free from unjust and inequitable systems, socioeconomic walls, emotional blockages, and traumatic boundaries caused by adverse childhood and life experiences. Marshall truly believes every human has the ability to walk in total wholeness and unlock their greatness.

Marshall is a leading expert, author, and one of the premier male empowerment speakers in the educational and wellness arenas. Through his transformational and relational methods of speaking and coaching, he has empowered thousands around the world and has made it his life's work to empower boys and men to become the best versions of themselves.

Member Directory

Latino Advisory Council Members

Yeni Rojas, LAC Chairperson

Intact Family Regional Administrator for Cook and Northern Regions, DCFS

Julia Monzón, LAC Former Chairperson

Family Advocacy Centers Statewide Manager, DCFS

Jennifer Contreras, LAC Chair-Elect

Placement, National Youth Advocate Program, POS

Rosa Maria Molina-Lassalle, Scribe

Child Protection OA, DCFS

Coty Corcoles

Child Protection Investigators, DCFS

José R. García

Clinical Division PSA, DCFS

José Javier López

Ex-Oficio/Director's Liaison

DEI, Office of Latino Services Chief, DCFS

Moises Jimenez

Placement PSA, DCFS

Juan Maldonado

Child Protection Investigations, DCFS

Evelyn Martínez

Child Protection Investigations PSA, DCFS

Melissa Martínez

Legal Guardian's Office, DCFS

Azalea Mejía

Social Service Program Planner IV, DCFS

Beatríz Ramírez

Recruitment & Resources PSA, Cook County, DCFS

Liliana Romero

Clinical Practice & Professional Development, DCFS

Latino Advisory Council Planning Committee Members

The following Planning Committee members are responsible for making this Latino Family Institute Day a success!

Yeni Rojas, LAC Chairperson

Intact Family Services, Regional Administrator, DCFS

Julia Monzón

LAC Planning Committee Chairperson

Family Advocacy Centers Statewide Manager, DCFS

Jennifer Contreras, LAC Chair-Elect

Placement, National Youth Advocate Program, POS

Coty Corcoles

Child Protection Investigations, DCFS

José R. García

Clinical Practice & Professional Development, DCFS

Moises Jimenez

Placement Supervisor, DCFS

Rosa Maria Molina-Lassalle, Scribe

Child Protection/Office Coordinator, DCFS

José Javier López

DEI, Office of Latino Services, DCFS

Juan Maldonado

Child Protection Investigations, DCFS

Evelyn Martínez

Child Protection Investigations Supervisor, DCFS

Melissa Martínez

Legal Guardian's Office, ACWS, DCFS

Azalea Mejía

Social Service Program Planner IV, DCFS

Beatríz Ramírez

Resources and Recruitment Supervisor, Cook, DCFS

Liliana Romero

Clinical Practice and Professional Development, DCFS

Guadalupe Toledo

Adoptions Unit CWS, DCFS

34th DCFS LAC Family Institute Day At-a-Glance

8:30 am - 9:00 am	Exhibitors PowerPoint
8:30 am - 9:00 am	Check-In
9:00 am - 9:30 am	Welcome/Opening Session <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Rico Mangram, <i>Rico No Suave Show</i>, Master of Ceremonies• Yeni Rojas, Chairperson, DCFS Latino Advisory Council• Julia Monzón, Chairperson, Latino Family Institute Day• Laura Vargas, Assistant Professor, Coordinator of Child Welfare Track, College of Education and Social Work, Aurora University• Daniel L. Fitzgerald, Chief, Office of Diversity, Equity and Inclusion, DCFS• Marc D. Smith, Director, DCFS
9:30 am - 10:30 am	Keynote Speaker <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Robert H. Marshall, Jr. Author, Speaker, Survivor
10:30 am - 12:00 pm	Workshop Session I (Virtual Breakout Rooms) <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Recruitment and Retention, New Hiring Practices, Union Strong2. Active Shooter in the Workplace – Action Steps Toward Safety3. Domestic Violence 101: Breaking the Cycle4. Best Practice for LGBTQI+ Youth5. Echoes: The stories of male survivors overcoming sexual trauma
12:00 pm - 1:30 pm	Optional Breakout Session (Aurora University 411)
12:00 pm - 12:30 pm	Lunch Break (Cooking with Rico Live Show - Part I, See Page 18)
12:30 pm - 1:00 pm	Lunch Break (Exhibitors Powerpoint)
1:00 pm - 1:30 pm	Lunch Break (Cooking with Rico Live Show - Part II, See Page 18)
1:30 pm - 2:00 pm	Annual Awards Presentation
2:00 pm - 3:30 pm	Workshop Session II (Breakout Rooms) <ol style="list-style-type: none">6. Trauma and Recovery: Non-Traditional Community Resources7. The Bridge from Crisis to Emotional Stability with the Goal of Recovery Across Generational Trauma8. Using Assessment Tools Effectively to Promote Safety, Permanency and Well Being9. Vicarious Trauma on Mental Health Providers10. Recognizing and Responding to Signs of Family Stress
3:30 pm - 3:45 pm	Closing Session and Remarks <p>Latin American Flag and Anthem Video</p>

Mega Workshop 9:30 am – 10:30 am

Echoes: The Stories of Male Survivors Overcoming Sexual Trauma

Presenter: Robert H. Marshall, Jr.

A workshop that will give you the tools to empathize, support and advocate for boys and male survivors of sexual trauma within urban and indigenous communities.

Session I Workshops 10:30 am – 1:00 pm

WORKSHOP 1: Recruitment and Retention, New Hiring Practices, Union Practices

Presenters: Araceli Tirado & José J. López

This Workshop will explore the new hiring practices for the Department highlighting the differences and changes made during the last few years. Central Management and DCFS retention efforts will also be discussed. The intersection between the Union and the Department will also be discussed. Basic Union information will be presented including benefits, rights and protection afforded to union members.

WORKSHOP 2: Active Shooter in Workplace – Action Steps Toward Safety

Presenter: Juan Valenzuela

This workshop is intended to teach attendees situational awareness by providing guidance on how best to use observation skills, assessment of workplace safety protocols, and peer interaction evaluation.

WORKSHOP 3: Domestic Violence 101: Breaking the Cycle

Presenters: Aniela Tyksinski & Nisha Patel

A discussion of the dynamics of domestic violence and the impact on survivors. Domestic violence is an underlying condition that increases the risk of abuse and neglect to children. Examine the intersection of child abuse and neglect, and domestic violence. Will discuss the impact of exposure to violence on children and identify indicators of domestic violence. Examine cultural factors pertaining to domestic violence in Latino/Hispanic families; and discuss the impact of COVID-19 on families experiencing domestic violence. We will also share Sarah's Inn's work with both survivors and individuals who have perpetrated domestic violence. We will provide information on the DCFS domestic violence intervention program.

WORKSHOP 4: How to Serve LGBTQI+ Youth in Care

Presenters: Len Meyer & Elizabeth Smith

This workshop will offer participants a bird's-eye view of the services and resources for LGBTQI+ youth in care and will equip staff with the support the youth need. The workshop will give participants information from LGBTQI+ youth taken from the Sexual Orientation, Gender Identity & Expression (SOGIE) survey completed by youth in care.

WORKSHOP 5: Echoes: The stories of male survivors overcoming sexual trauma

Presenter: Robert H. Marshall, Jr.

This workshop on trauma will give you the tools to empathize, support and advocate for boys and male survivors of sexual trauma within urban and indigenous communities.

Session II Workshops 2:00 – 3:30 pm

WORKSHOP 6: Trauma and Recovery: Non-Traditional Community Resources

Presenter: Christina Griffin

This workshop combines non-traditional community resource providers. They discuss the trauma landscape from different points of view that ultimately promote family stability, reunification, and healing.

WORKSHOP 7: The Bridge from Crisis to Emotional Stability with the Goal of Recovery Across Generational Trauma

Presenter: Dr. Mercedes Martinez

Learn to ask ourselves, are we making a positive impact on those we serve in the face of high turnover, compassion fatigue, limited resources, and our own losses through the pandemic and in general? Provide information, recommendations and tools that can be used to assess and strengthen cultural awareness and self-care about the global pandemic, resulting trauma, compassion fatigue and behavioral health challenges on children and their families. Provide information, recommendations, and tools with a focus on diversity, equity, and inclusion. Practices in disaster behavioral services: guiding principles of cultural awareness, challenges, interventions and burn out in caregivers as well as those providing dedicated service to children and their families.

WORKSHOP 8: Utilizing DCFS Assessment Tools Effectively to Promote Safety, Permanency and Well-Being

Presenter: Laura Vargas

Will discuss the stages of assessment that continue through the life of a DCFS case. The importance of addressing the underlining conditions that often bring families to the attention of DCFS will be discussed. Hands-on practice will occur during the workshop on how to apply existing DCFS assessment tools, which support the safety, permanency, and well-being of children who are in the care of DCFS.

WORKSHOP 9: Vicarious Trauma on Mental Health Providers

Presenter: Jessica Nuñez

Learn about vicarious trauma and the effects it has on mental health providers on a daily basis. Explore how to identify behaviors and symptoms of vicarious trauma, how to manage it and what are ways to support one another.

WORKSHOP 10: Recognizing and Responding to Signs of Family Stress

Presenters: Greishen Rodriguez & Tarcisio Ornelas

Responding to signs of child abuse and neglect is crucial—and research now allows us to start earlier in keeping children safe and families strong. By recognizing and responding to early signs of stress, family-serving staff can assist families with getting the support they need to promote the health and well-being of their family and prevent abuse and neglect. This training will support participants getting in touch with their own stress and help them recognize early signs of family stress

Presenter Biographies



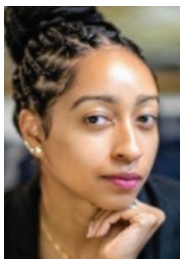
Rico Mangram

Rico Mangram is a Chicago native who started his career as a Computer Scientist. His next career adventure was as a Professional Salsa Dancer and Instructor, followed by Creator of an event production company focusing on weddings, which led to him writing a book called *"Rock The Newlyweds Wedding."*

In 2018, Rico started producing his current talk show *"The Rico No Suave Show"* and somehow as if those accomplishments weren't enough, he found his passion for cooking and decided to produce and host a cooking show called *"Cooking with Rico."*

Currently, both of his shows are in negotiations with syndicated markets:

www.TheRicoNoSuaveShow.com



Christina Griffith

My name is Christina Griffith LCPC, I am licensed in the state of WA and IL. My background entailed working with children by providing behavior support plans for families, working with developmentally delayed children, and nonverbal children. I have worked in the ER in which my title was assessment and referral specialist in which I assess and provide resources for the individuals. I have worked on multiple psych units with children (DCFS) and adults. I am currently working on the insurance side (utilization management) while running my own private practice.

My approach is holistic in view, which provides support that looks at the whole person and not just focus on their mental illness needs. My approach includes support for physical, emotional, social, and spiritual wellbeing.



José J. López

José Javier López has been with the Illinois Department of Children and Family Services many years and a state employee for 34 years. He is the current Chief of the Office of Latino Services, where he serves as a policy-formulating administrator overseeing all Latino services and related issues for the agency. He provides advice and recommendations to the Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Deputy on matters involving Latino services and acts as the liaison to multiple community stakeholders including governmental, media, philanthropic and community officials actively promoting the department's mission.

José originally began his career with the state as a public aid caseworker. He served as Special Assistant to the Illinois Department of Human Services' Secretary, Director of Hispanic/Latino Affairs, and as the Chief of the Bureau of Latino Relations and Statewide Translations Section at the Department of Public Aid. Additionally, José served on the Governor's Office of New Americans, the State of Illinois' Latino Family Commission and Central Management Services Hispanic Employment Plan Council.

José's passion has always been in working with the Latino community where he currently serves as the League of United Latin American Citizens' (LULAC) Midwest Vice-President and was formerly the LULAC State Director for Illinois for four years and held the Presidency of the Illinois Association of Hispanic State Employees. He sits on the Boards of the Illinois Migrant Council, Central States SER, Illinois Association of Agencies and Community Organizations on Migrant Affairs, Catholic Charities of Chicago's Latino Advisory Committee, Chicago Bilingual Nurses Consortium and the Chicago Dia de los Niños Parade Committee. He was formerly on the Board of the Heartland Alliance for Human Needs

Presenter Biographies

& Human Rights, Por un Barrio Mejor, Midwest Coalition in Defense of the Immigrant, Latinos for a Healthy Illinois and Illinois Association of Healthcare Interpreters.



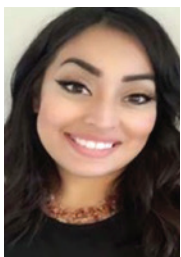
Len Meyer

Len Meyer (*pronouns; they/them*) is a noted speaker, consultant, and educator regarding transgender health care and LGBTQ+ health care. Currently, Meyer works as the LGBTQI+ Diversity Trainer for DCFS contracted by the University of Illinois. Meyer has previously served as the Downstate Community Engagement Manager at Planned Parenthood of Illinois and the Executive Director of the Central Illinois Pride Health Center. Meyer consulted with the Illinois Department of Corrections and was the previous Community Co-Chair for the HIV planning committee through the Illinois Department of Public Health. Additionally, Meyer served as a Transgender Trainer for the US Department of Justice in Illinois and Missouri. Meyer has both a bachelor and master degree in Healthcare Administration Services and is currently working on their doctorate in Healthcare Administration. Meyer resides in Bloomington, IL.



Mercedes Martinez

Dr. Mercedes Martinez is a board-certified child, adolescent and adult psychiatrist and mother of 3 adult children, Tatiana, Emilio, and Luis, Familia Martinez. She has had the privilege to provide services to the underserved communities of Chicago for 26 plus years, completing her child fellowship program at the University of Illinois at Chicago in 1998. She completed her adult psychiatric training at Rosalind Franklin School of Medicine and Science. She was awarded the Group for Advancement of Psychiatry Fellowship (1995-1997). Dr. Martinez held the position of medical director for the Illinois Department of Public Health- Division of Behavioral Health. She participated in a video (Real Psychiatrists, Doctors in Action) promoted by Dr. Annelle Primm (past Director of Minority and National Affairs for the American Psychiatric Association. Mercedes is currently a board member of the National Latino Behavioral Health Association in New Mexico and a fellow with Dr. James Greenblatt's integrative & functional Psychiatry Redefined. She is a state employee since 2014 and a breast cancer survivor!



Jessica Nuñez

Jessica Nuñez, MSW, CDVP is the Title IX Coordinator and Behavioral Intervention Team Case Manager at Aurora University in Aurora, Illinois. Jessica has worked in the community mental health field for over 10 years. She has worked as a bilingual therapist providing services for victims/survivors of domestic and sexual violence, has worked with families in DCFS' Intact Family Services program and as a Family Case Manager for Illinois Department of Human Services. Jessica is dedicated to working and collaborating with others to provide the resources that many people and communities need.



Nisha Patel

Nisha is a Licensed Clinical Social Worker; and is the Statewide Administrator of the Domestic Violence Intervention Program with the Illinois Department of Children and Family Services, through the NIU Center for the Study of Family Violence and Sexual Assault. In this capacity, she provides case consultation, training, and program oversight to promote a comprehensive statewide Departmental response to families experiencing

Presenter Biographies

domestic violence. Ms. Patel has over twenty years of experience in the field of Domestic Violence and violence prevention, and has worked with adult and child survivors, and perpetrators of abuse. She has been an Adjunct Professor with the Graduate School of Social Work at Dominican University; and Field Instructor for MSW students from Loyola University, University of Illinois at Chicago, University of Chicago, and Dominican University. She also served as Vice Chair of the DCFS Asian American Advisory Council. She has previously provided DV workshops at the DCFS Latino Family Institute Day and DCFS Asian American Advisory Council Institute Day.



Tarcisio Ornelas

Born in Leon, Guanajuato, Mexico Tarcisio came to Chicago in 1988 with a bachelor's degree in Philosophy. He brought with him many ideas and his best intentions to help people on other continents—perhaps doing missionary work.

In 2009, Tarcisio's career focus changed; his wife, Celina Orozco (a Be Strong Families Founding Partner) introduced him to Parent Cafés and the Strengthening Families Illinois initiative. Through Strengthening Families Illinois, he learned about and participated in a movement that had parents and systems working together to make families stronger and children safer by building Protective Factors, while promoting and supporting parents as leaders.

Tarcisio has served in a variety of capacities since Be Strong Families began in 2012—special projects manager, finance, operations and HR manager. Currently, Tarcisio is a Sr. Training and Technical Assistance Provider on Parent Cafés and many others Be Strong Families workshops. He shares with other parents what he has learned that has helped him and his family be a stronger family. Tarcisio Ornelas earned a Master Degree in Divinity (Theology) from Catholic Theological Union.



Greishen Rodriguez

Greishen began her career inspiring others by sharing her life story growing up in the child welfare system—using her extensive knowledge and experiences to educate and empower others. She started with Be Strong Families in 2017 as the Child Welfare Program Assistant, and because of her hard work and standards of excellence was promoted to her current position as Program and Training Manager.

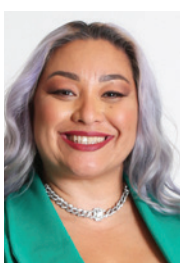
Greishen understands the importance of preparation, hard work, and flexibility. She applies these values to Be Strong Families by being a team player, prepping for events efficiently, facilitating workshops, and practicing inquiry-based learning. She continues to advocate for family reunification and more importantly, strives to be a role model for child welfare-involved youth and young adults.

Presenter Biographies



Elizabeth Smith

Elizabeth has worked in the Social Work field for over 23 years, while specializing in Child Welfare for the last 9. During her tenure at the Department of Children and Family Services she served as a Child Welfare Advance Specialist until her promotion in 2019 to Clinical Services Coordinator within the DCFS Clinical Division. Elizabeth received a Master Degree of Social Work from Southern Illinois University in 2013. Along with her husband and family, Elizabeth has further served the Southern Illinois Community by fostering many children for the past 15 years. The Smiths are Licensed Specialized Foster Parents and have provided sanctuary for many youths from all demographics including youths from the LGBTQI+ community. Within her role as a Clinical Services Coordinator, Elizabeth has taken the lead for the Southern Region in consulting with various Divisions from both the Department and the Private Sector on youth that belong to the LGBTQI+ community. Elizabeth has proven herself to be a strong ally for the LGBTQI+ community and is always striving to learn more and develop new ways to encourage families, staff and the community to become allies as well.



Aracely Galvan Tirado

Aracely is a Mexican-American Veteran of the United States Air Force, who was born and raised in Chicago. She began her journey with the Department of Children and Family Services at Juvenile Court. She then moved to the Background Unit in Licensing and is now in Foster Care. Aracely has been an active member of AFSCME Local 2081 since she first began with the Department. She is a Certified Steward and is the first Latina to hold the Vice President seat for her Local.



Aniela Tyksinski

Aniela is the Training and Education Program Supervisor at Sarah's Inn, a comprehensive domestic violence agency in Forest Park. Aniela has worked in the field for over five years, first realizing their passion for the work as an intern with Sarah's Inn while studying at the University of Notre Dame. Aniela worked at an emergency DV shelter before returning to Sarah's Inn in 2018 as a Community Advocate with a focus on providing services in the Little Village and Marshall Square communities.



Laura Vargas

Laura Vargas LCSW, CWEL is currently a full-time Assistant Professor at Aurora University in the MSW program, she is also the Coordinator of the Child Welfare Track at AU and is responsible for teaching and training new child welfare professionals through the DCFS Foundation Curriculum. She began her child welfare career in 1993 as a child welfare case manager. Laura has dedicated her career to enhancing, improving, educating, and supporting families involved in the DCFS system and child welfare professionals who are engaged in direct service. She has held case management, supervisory, and program director positions at Catholic Charities, Archdiocese of Chicago, Catholic Charities, Diocese of Joliet,

Presenter Biographies

and Lutheran Social Services of Illinois. Most recently Laura is the owner and director of Perspectives Counseling, Consulting, and Mediation Services PLLC. Her practice provides trauma-informed, culturally responsive clinical services to English and Spanish speaking DCFS involved families www.perspectiveslcs.com



Juan Valenzuela

Lt. Juan Valenzuela is a 22-year veteran of the Illinois State Police and currently assigned as the Patrol Lieutenant for the Illinois State Police District 2-Elgin (DuPage, Lake, McHenry, Kane, DeKalb Counties). Lt. Valenzuela is a Control and Arrest Tactics Instructor, Firearms Instructor, Conceal Carry Instructor, Crash Reconstruction Officer, Recruiter, Fitness Monitor, Field Training Officer, Instructor for Understanding Perceptions of Biased Based Policing, Procedural Justice and Diversity, Equity and Inclusion instructor. Lt. Valenzuela also serves as a member of the Diversity Advisory Committee, Use of Force Committee and the Illinois State Police Centennial Committee.

Lt. Valenzuela spent almost twenty years patrolling the Chicago Area Expressways before transferring to the Elgin post. He has been involved in many critical incidents throughout his career. Lt. Valenzuela has a passion for service and helping others by conducting Thanksgiving Meal Sharing programs, feed-the-homeless events, mentoring youth, and the Christmas Underprivileged Kids party playing a Santa Clause. Lt. Valenzuela is a graduate of the FBI National Academy Session 279 and was selected as the section 3 Representative. Lt. Valenzuela is the immediate past President of HISLEA and Board Member to the State Police Heritage Foundation, as well as member of the Kane County Chief's Association, DeKalb County Law Enforcement Executives Committee, DuPage County Chief's Association. Lt. Valenzuela is a graduate of Loyola University Chicago with degrees in Political Science and Philosophy. Lt. Valenzuela has been married for 20 years to Esperanza and have three daughters, Esmeralda, Johanna and Jocelynn.

Special Thanks!



The Latino Advisory Council would like to acknowledge the following individuals and institutions for their generous contributions.

•

Marc D. Smith
Director, DCFS

Aurora University
Laura Vargas
David Benitez

Division of Diversity, Equity and Inclusion
Daniel L. Fitzgerald
José J. López

Burgos Award
Lourdes Colón, Burgos Coordinator
Burgos Family

Office of Communications
Jen Florent
Deborah Lopez
Bert Tijerina

Brooke Taylor
DCFS Office of Learning and Professional Development

Alix Young
Lead Project Assistant, University of Illinois U-C, School of Social Work

Rico Mangram
"Rico No Suave" Show

•

Cultural Presentation: Cooking with Rico Live

If you would like to cook with Rico, this is what you'll need:

Dish 1 - Lamb Tostadas

- 1 Cup of Grape tomatoes (Diced)
- Head of Iceberg Lettuce (Chopped to your desire)
- 1 Can of Black Beans
- Sour Cream (Optional but I love it)
- Tostada shells (I use Mission or El Milagro)
- 4 Lamb Shoulder Chops
- 1 TBSP of Olive Oil
- Shredded Colby Jack Cheese
- BBQ Sauce (Optional)
- A Skillet, Cast Iron Skillet or a WOK



Dish 2 - Arroz con Pollo Cubano (Chicken and Rice Cuban Style)

- 4 pounds bone-in chicken pieces (I use thighs and legs.)
- 1/4 cup all-purpose flour (or gluten-free baking flour)
- 3 tablespoons Sazon Completa "Cuban Complete Seasoning"
- 2 tablespoons olive oil
- 1 large sweet onion, peeled and chopped
- 1 large red bell pepper, seeded and chopped
- 2 cups long-grain rice
- 3 1/2 cups chicken broth
- 1 tablespoon tomato paste
- 1/4 cup chopped cilantro (or parsley)
- A 7-Quart Dutch Oven or a 7-Quart Pot



Training Credits



Institute Training Credit

All registered attendees are expected to arrive on time and attend the full Institute in order to receive DCFS clock hours, Social Work CEUs, LCPC CEUs and MFT CEUs.

A maximum of 4 CEUs and DCFS Clock Hours may be awarded to participants who attend eligible sessions.



LATINO ADVISORY COUNCIL



Illinois Department of
DCFS
Children & Family Services

SAFETY  **SAFETY**
FIRST ALWAYS

312.814.6800
www2.illinois.gov/DCFS

Printed by Authority of the State of Illinois
rev 10/14/22 at 8:30