



AMISTADES, INC. WINS GRANTS AND CONTRACTS TO IMPROVE LATINO COMMUNITY CONDITIONS

Tucson, Arizona (October 6, 2023): Amistades, Inc. (Amistades) is pleased to announce further recognition for its innovative approach to improve Latino community conditions in Tucson and Southern Arizona through three new projects enhancing citizenship attainment, health equity, and effective engagement.

- **Proyecto Ollin**, awarded over 2 years for \$250,000 by the United States Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) will allow Amistades to develop innovative approaches to address the unique barriers to naturalization driven by US-Mexico border proximity and the fear and apathy it creates for the expansive population of Mexican residents in Southern Arizona's Pima, Cochise, and Santa Cruz counties. USCIS made 65 national awards for citizenship and integration programs. This Amistades award was the only one given in Arizona for innovation.

The project, named and framed after the Aztec symbol for movement, will work to reach those citizen-eligible Mexican Legal Permanent Residents (LPRS) who have not pursued naturalization. In conjunction with the Tucson Hispanic Chamber of Commerce, special focus will be placed on those who 1) have jobs that require mobility and/or non-traditional hours of operation, and 2) live in the most rural areas of the region. Mexicans remain the single largest group of foreign-born residents in the United States and represent more than 60% of all US Latinos.

- **Prevencion Sin Fronteras**, awarded over 3 years for \$565,668 by the Arizona Governor's Office of Youth, Faith, and Family (GOYFF) will allow Amistades to expand its successful and indispensable trauma-informed youth substance use prevention program in Douglas, Arizona.

Among other activities, this program implements *El Renacimiento*, an academically reviewed and published curriculum, created by Amistades, that focuses on Latino youth, to help them heal, grow, and thrive, by developing a positive cultural identity grounded in their indigenous history and culture.

- Amistades will provide **Training and Technical Assistance to Arizona Youth Partnership** over one year for \$10,000. This project speaks to the need for improved and expanded engagement with Latino stakeholders within the nonprofit ecosystem. It additionally recognizes Amistades' institutional leadership in Arizona related to effective understanding of, and capacity building for, genuine partnership between the Latino community and mainstream society, leading to improved outcomes for Latinos.

Amistades is a Latino-led, Latino-serving non-profit committed to race and equity issues in Southern Arizona through the provision of culturally responsive services, advocacy for social justice, and community empowerment. Amistades uses a culturally rooted intergenerational family approach to working with Latinos. The agency prioritizes addressing immediate issues, leads efforts that eliminate false narratives about Latinos, and develops system focused strategies that change the conditions that perpetuate inequities.

"We remain true to our innovative, intergenerational, approach that recognizes and validates our community's lived experiences and realities. It is heartening to see broader acceptance of our values and priorities. We are excited by these new partnerships, which recognize the importance of centering Latino people and culture for positive impact and emphasize nonprofits' economic contributions to our community and society," said Ricardo M. Jasso, Founder of Amistades.

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