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W.K. Kellogg Foundation Grants Mi Casa \$690,000 to Help Families Get Ahead

Investment helps Mi Casa create a comprehensive economic advancement center, inform national best practices

Mi Casa Resource Center has been awarded a three-year, \$690,000 grant from the W.K. Kellogg Foundation to bring together Mi Casa's multiple economic advancement services to help low-income families move toward economic self-sufficiency.

"Integrated services" – or providing multiple, bundled services at a single location– is a national model for service delivery that has been validated by social sciences research and proven to lead to more positive outcomes for low-income individuals (e.g., getting a job, increasing income, decreasing debt-to-income ratio, etc.).

"For the last several years, Mi Casa has been systematically developing a comprehensive array of services that help individuals increase their income, build assets or address other financial concerns," says Mi Casa CEO Christine Marquez-Hudson. "We know that when you help a parent stabilize financially, you're also helping their children. And when a person launches or grows a business, you're also creating jobs for their employees. Mi Casa will use this funding to create a system that helps families define their economic goals and access the various services they need to achieve those goals. Funding will also help us evaluate the program to understand its effectiveness and impact on moving families out of poverty."

Part of the rationale of the Kellogg Foundation in making this investment in Mi Casa is to add to the body of knowledge and research that supports integrated services as an effective national model for economic empowerment work.

By supporting Mi Casa, the Kellogg Foundation hopes to learn how a model that includes small business development programs and services for multiple generations can inform the national conversation about integrated services, a model that is being replicated across the country.

"We are excited to invest in Mi Casa to help inform what we are learning nationally around integrated service delivery (ISD). Although we have proven data on how ISD impacts workforce development efforts, we know much less about how these services impact outcomes for entrepreneurs. This is new ground for the field and could really offer exciting insights into how best to serve and support entrepreneurs personally and towards

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sustaining their businesses,” says Paula Sammons, Program Officer on the Family Economic Security Team at the W.K. Kellogg Foundation.

Mi Casa’s suite of economic advancement services, including career training, small business development programs, free tax preparation, one-on-one financial counseling, housing counseling, and GED prep are facilitated by strong partnerships.

“Through Mi Casa’s career training, small business development programs and other economic advancement services, the agency is a valued partner in the City of Denver’s efforts to deliver a world class city where everyone matters,” said Paul Washington, Director of the Denver Office of Economic Development.

The funding will initially be used to integrate services at Mi Casa’s headquarters locations with plans to roll out the model at Mi Casa’s other sites in coming years.

Mi Casa’s integrated services program partners include:

- *Mpowered* – provides one-on-one financial counseling
- Denver Asset Building Coalition – provides free tax preparation and tax education services
- Colorado Housing Enterprises – provides homeownership counseling and classes
- Community College of Denver – provides GED test preparation classes
- Colorado Lawyers Committee – organizes monthly Legal Night event for free legal info
- Spring Institute – provides English as a second language classes

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About Mi Casa Resource Center:

Mi Casa Resource Center is a nonprofit organization founded in 1976 that works to advance the economic success of Latino and working families. With four locations across Denver, Mi Casa offers a variety of integrated services for economic advancement to help families achieve their goals of financial independence and stability. Learn more at www.MiCasaResourceCenter.org

About the W.K. Kellogg Foundation:

The W.K. Kellogg Foundation (WKKF), founded in 1930 as an independent, private foundation by breakfast cereal pioneer, Will Keith Kellogg, is among the largest philanthropic foundations in the United States. Guided by the belief that all children should have an equal opportunity to thrive, WKKF works with communities to create conditions for vulnerable children so they can realize their full potential in school, work and life.

The Kellogg Foundation is based in Battle Creek, Mich., and works throughout the United States and internationally, as well as with sovereign tribes. Special emphasis is paid to priority places where there are high concentrations of poverty and where children face significant barriers to success. WKKF priority places in the U.S. are in Michigan, Mississippi, New Mexico and New Orleans; and internationally, are in Mexico and Haiti. For more information, visit www.wkkf.org.