



# LATINO NEEDS ASSESSMENT

## KEY FINDINGS OVERVIEW

CONDUCTED IN Q3 & Q4 OF 2023

## INTRO

Since 2004, La Paz has served Chattanooga's growing Latino community through services, programs and outreach activities that focus on advocacy, education, and inclusion. With a track record of successful direct support for the Latino community and frequent collaborations with other organizations dedicated to including and serving this population, La Paz conducted a Latino Community Needs Assessment to inform both conversation and action around ensuring this important but frequently underserved community segment is embraced, encouraged, and enabled to thrive. This project - called *Tu Voz* or "Your Voice" - collected insights firsthand from more than 300 Latino adults. La Paz is very grateful for the Latino community's excellent participation and willingness to take part in this important initiative.

## KEY FINDING THEMES

### Multifaceted Latino Community

Respondents exhibit diverse backgrounds, encompassing varied countries of origin, primary languages and fluency levels, educational backgrounds and income levels, all reflecting the vibrant diversity within our community

### Feeling Welcome in the Chattanooga Area

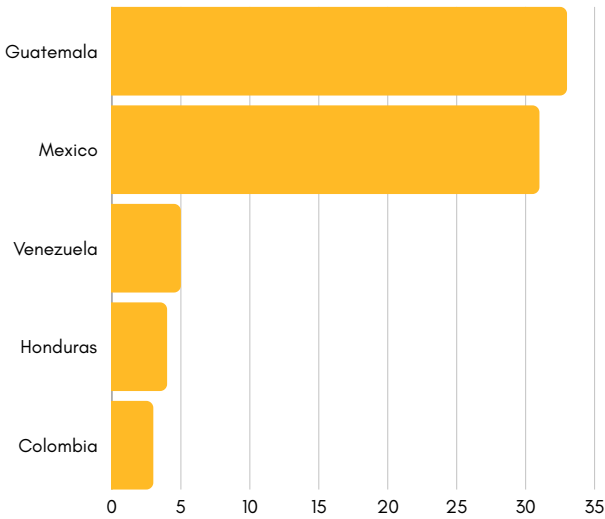
A majority of respondents expressed feeling embraced by the Chattanooga community. This encouraging discovery celebrates the inclusive nature of our city, underscoring the potential for further progress through proactive efforts to promote inclusive practices

### Empowering Potential

The highest ranking topics of interest and needs are all geared towards fostering individual and familial triumph, encompassing a strong emphasis on higher education and the spirited pursuit of entrepreneurship

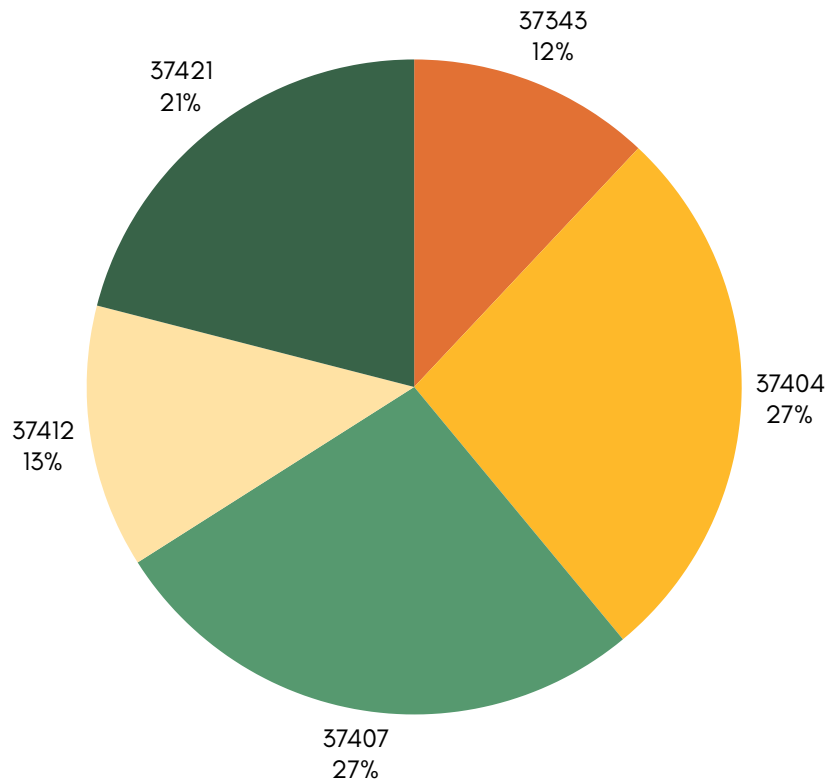
# MULTIFACETED LATINO COMMUNITY

The respondents differ in personal background, including heritage/origin, languages spoken, education and income level, as well as needs and aspirations.

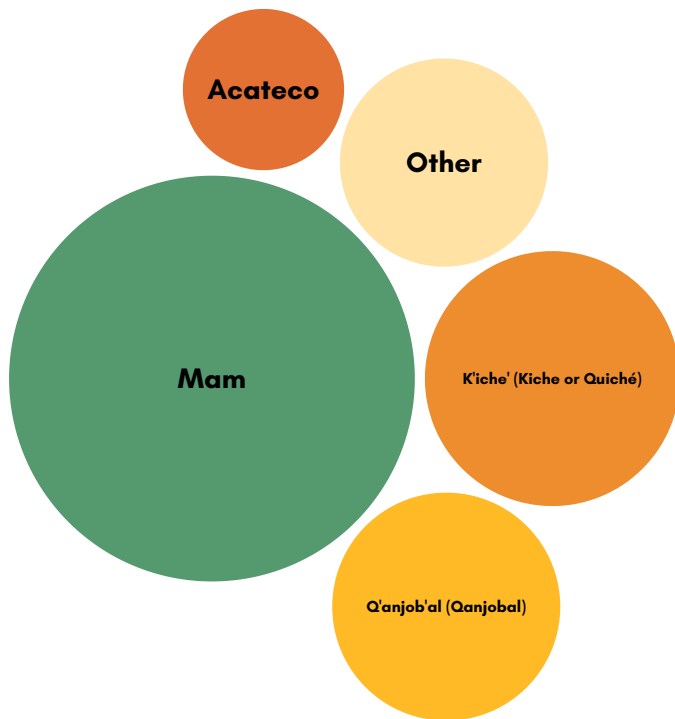


The findings show the top 5 Latin American countries represented in the sample population are Guatemala (33%), Mexico (31%), Venezuela (5%), Honduras (4%) and Colombia (3%).

## Geographical distribution of participants across Hamilton County



Over 41 zip codes were represented in the participant survey. This chart represents the top five.



## Languages Spoken

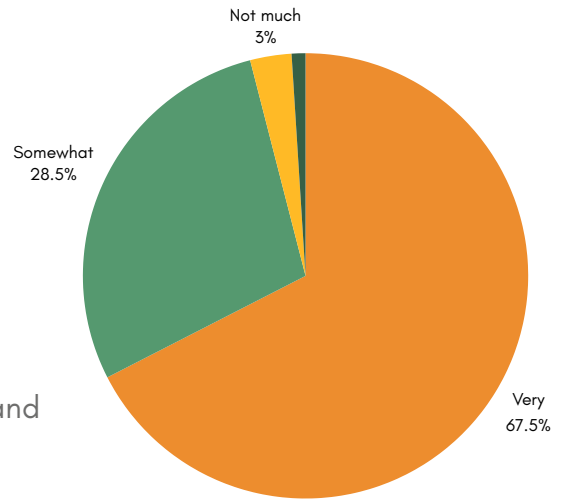
Twenty-six percent (26%) of respondents indicated speaking English with fluency and the majority indicating little to no fluency. Seventy-six percent (76%) of respondents indicated that they speak Spanish as their primary language in the home. Twenty-nine percent (29%) of the respondents indicated that they speak a Mayan language. 60% of respondents indicated a desire to improve their English language fluency.

In the accompanying visual is represented the non-English and non-Spanish language distribution of the respondents.

# FEELING WELCOME IN THE CHATTANOOGA AREA

A thriving Latino community is one that has financial stability and economic opportunity, and feels welcome to retain and safely express their values, their culture and their identity.

45% of respondents have lived in Chattanooga five years or less. We asked participants how they felt when they arrived and how they feel now. 67% indicated they always feel welcome and comfortable speaking their native language in public.



Participants indicated how welcome they felt in Chattanooga at the time of survey completion.

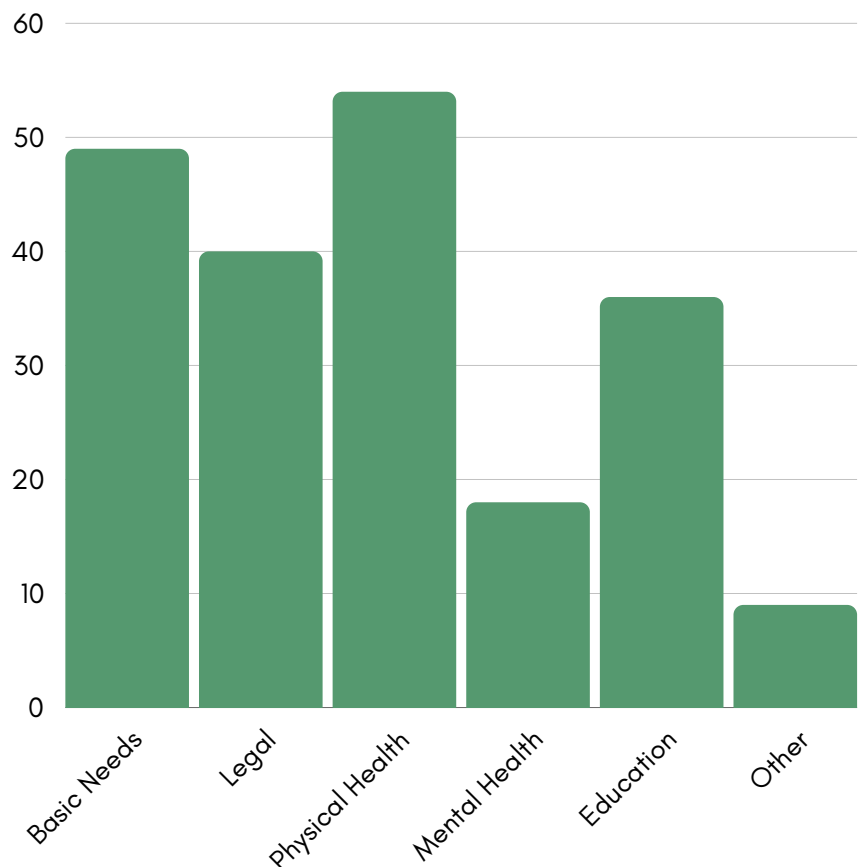
## Accessing Information

Word of mouth and social media emerged as the top two channels through which respondents receive their information. Traditional media methods such as television, radio, and newspapers, along with referrals from other organizations and churches and were also cited by participants as effective communication methods.

Interestingly, 29% of participants reported no barriers to seeking help from community organizations, indicating they knew where to access assistance when needed. However, for those who did identify challenges - language barriers, legal status and navigating the systems, were the top three obstacles hindering access to assistance.

## Needs and Trends

Participants were asked to express their top three community needs. Physical Health (general medicine, dental care, visual, and exercise and movement) and Basic Needs (food, shelter, clothing) were the top two with Legal and Education (language classes, FAFSA and systems knowledge) following close behind.



## Healthcare Access

Sixty-one percent (61%) of participants indicated that they do not have health care coverage. Sixty-nine percent (69%) stated that they have sought medical help from local providers. Of those that have not, the barriers include knowledge of where to go, legal status, language, cost, and fear.

## EMPOWERING POTENTIAL

Twenty-four percent (24%) of participants continued their education in the U.S. Of those, 65% pursued postsecondary education. Ninety-four percent (94%) of all participants consider higher education important for their children. Barriers indicated included access to higher education.

Fifty-one percent (51%) of participants indicated that they moved to Chattanooga for employment opportunities. Eighty-four percent (84%) of participants expressed interest in starting their own business.

Thirty-nine percent (39%) of households have at least one person that is 18 years of age and eligible to vote. Of those eligible, 71% are registered.

# 51%

**of participants indicated that they moved to Chattanooga for employment opportunities, both from their home countries as well as other U.S. states.**

# 84%

**of participants expressed interest in receiving information on how to start their own business.**

# 71%

**of individuals eligible to vote are registered.**

### Special thanks to our project sponsors



## ASSESSMENT DESIGN

The 2023 Tu Voz Latino Community Needs Assessment used a selective sampling method with intentional participant selection. 461 adults (18 years or older) initiated survey execution, with 305 surveys completed at the end of the period. Survey participants received a token of appreciation for their participation (Tu Voz branded items; Chick-fil-A gift cards). The survey consisted of 60 questions, organized by topic, administered in Spanish, online and in person. In-person surveys were collected at multiple locations/events with an anticipated or known density of Latino community members. La Paz staff and volunteers assisted in survey collection. The rate of survey non-completion posed a notable challenge; the findings presented in this report reflect the analysis for fully completed surveys only.

## PARTICIPANT DEMOGRAPHICS

The Assessment requested the participation of one adult per household. There was diversity within the demographic characteristics of survey participants. A quick sketch of the survey participant demographics is as follows: 67% female; 78% between 18-45 years of age; 89% born in a Latin American country to one or more Latino parents; 56% have lived in the US for 6 years or more; 23% hold a Bachelor's or Advanced degree; and 67% have a household income of \$31,000 or less.

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