

Community Transformation 2023 HIGHLIGHTS



Martha Alejandra Fierro

As we approach the end of 2023, we, the Community Transformation Department at [Para Los Niños](#) (PLN), want to take a moment to express our gratitude to the hundreds of community residents across Best Start Region 1 (BSR1), in East LA, Metro LA, South El Monte / El Monte and Southeast LA, as well as our incredible allies, partners and funders, who have entrusted us with, and are committed to supporting our collective efforts to make the [BSR1 Driving Equity and Justice Community Bill of Human Rights](#) Vision and Goals a reality.

We also acknowledge this as one of the more difficult years we as a team and community have experienced, as we continue to mourn the loss of our dearest Martha Alejandra Fierro, PLN Community Transformation Promoter and Southeast LA Community Leader. It is in her memory that we committed and continue to commit to living up to her legacy, moving the work forward that she was so passionate about, committed to, and that she contributed to significantly over her short lifetime.

We dedicate the highlights included below, and our ongoing efforts, to Martha and her loving family and community.

Quality, Affordable and Stable Housing Efforts



Housing Collective Advocacy Workshops

Our partnership with Strategic Actions for a Just Economy (SAJE), LA Forward and Sandra McNeill Consulting granted us the opportunity to continue our Collective Advocacy efforts, engaging in capacity strengthening / building efforts to better understand the causes of housing inequity. BSR1 members learned about the history of redlining, tenant protections and how to leverage them for themselves, neighbors and communities and other relevant topics that help us understand housing inequities at the root. We look forward to our ongoing partnership in 2024, where BSR1 members will continue to take the knowledge and practices learned through the Housing Collective Advocacy capacity strengthening/building sessions, to mobilize to ensure the necessary systemic changes occur to guarantee that quality, affordable, and stable housing exist in Los Angeles County.

Housing Needs Assessment

Funded by The Robert Wood Johnson Foundation through the Data for Healthier Communities Grant, BSR1 was able to develop and implement a Housing Needs Assessment throughout BSR1, allowing us all a better understanding as to the historical and existing housing needs and conditions for BSR1 members. BSR1 members were then able to engage in data analysis sessions, where data surfaced by the Housing Needs Assessment was complemented by significant secondary data.

Housing Justice as Health Equity Collaborative

To ensure the equitable inclusion of community members in any and all housing and health equity efforts, we were granted funds by Human Impact Partners to share and scale our Community Transformation model. In the upcoming year, BSR1 will be supporting the inclusion of community members in the Housing Justice as Health Equity Collaborative.



BSR1 Representatives joined the Housing Now! Coalition in Sacramento, CA to meet with legislatures to advocate for Quality, Affordable and Stable Housing, April 2023

Campaigns, Coalitions, Networks and Partnerships

To ensure BSR1 Community Partnerships are best positioned to advance the vision and goals set out in the BSR1 Driving Equity and Justice Community Bill of Human Rights, we, along with BSR1 representatives, are active members in multiple campaigns, coalitions, networks, and partnerships. These efforts seek to shift conditions towards equity in response to housing, transportation, health, and immigration inequity, always ensuring that community representation is inherent in key decision-making spaces and in advocacy groups that educate California legislators on the systemic conditions that impact our communities.

- Colectivo Autónomo de Comunidades e Inquilinos
- Housing Justice and Health Equity Collaborative
- Housing Now!
- Immigrant Health Task Force
- LA County Affordable Housing Solutions Agency
- San Gabriel Valley Community Land Trust
- Slate Z

Equitable, Timely and Responsive Holistic Health Care

Transforming Systems of Care Program

In partnership with Children’s Hospital of Los Angeles (CHLA), and Cedars Sinai Medical Center (CSMC), we co-created and implemented the Community Promoter Transforming Systems of Care Program. This program aims to establish a highly skilled and community-centered workforce that improves child and family physical and mental health outcomes, while building the capacity of medical institutions to incorporate Community Promoters as staff members. Together, partners can shift institutional policies, practices, and processes to be more responsive to the needs of marginalized communities.

CHLA Community Transformation Promoters

Modeled after our Community Transformation Promoter Model established in 2011, Community Promoters support CHLA clients in resource and service navigation, acting as a conduit between the public health system, patients, their families, and community resources. They do this by providing families culturally fluent and affirming support in both navigating challenges in accessing care and connecting to community-based resources and services to supplement care provided by medical institutions. Additionally, Community Promoters work in partnership with CHLA Administrative Staff to share lessons learned and best practices to make policy, practice and process changes that ensure equitable service delivery.

Community Resource Connection Rate

Prior to the Community Promoters Transforming Systems of Care program, CHLA was experiencing a resource connection rate of (26%). After two and a half years of implementation, CHLA is now consistently achieving an estimated 85% resource connection rate.



What has contributed to this success is...

<p>421 sessions</p> <p>initiated by a combination of self and social worker referrals</p>	<p>8 days</p> <p>on average, Community Promoters connected with clients 8 days after connecting with a social worker</p>	<p>33 minutes</p> <p>on average, Community Promoters sessions with clients lasted 33 minutes</p>	<p>87 minutes</p> <p>on average, Community Promoters dedicated 87 minutes identifying resources</p>	<p>25 days</p> <p>on average, Community Promoters reconnected with clients after this initial session 25 days later</p>	<p>36% of sessions</p> <p>between Promoters and clients were held on the phone, with the remainder held over text and virtual meetings</p>
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“In my experience, the services I received so far have been helpful. The [Promoter] has helped me, and my family find resources that we urgently needed. My baby was hospitalized in critical condition at CHLA for a month and a half. From there, the social worker referred me to the Transforming Systems of Care Program. We regularly have doctor appointments for checkups for my baby. Veronica, the [Promoter] supporting my case, has helped me to get in contact with Medi-Cal and helped me to navigate the application process. We have been able to apply and successfully received Medi-Cal services for my baby. She also has helped me find additional resources that my family and I need such as CalFresh/Food Stamps, diapers and other baby items, mental health, and other services from the Regional Center and WorkSource Center.”

- CHLA Client

Promoter Transforming Systems of Care Manual – Coming Spring 2024!

In partnership with CHLA, Health Leads, and Laura Valles and Associates, we are developing the Promoter Transforming Systems of Care Manual, Evaluation Framework and Readiness Tools that will serve as a roadmap for other health intuitions and stakeholders to adopt and scale this equitable model designed to better serve marginalized communities.

California Department of Health Care Access and Information Feedback Sessions

We have been an active partner in the Community Health Workers / Promoter / Representatives (CHW/P/R) Feedback Sessions hosted by California Department of Health Care Access and Information (HCAI). We, along other stakeholders throughout the State of California, have supported by providing input on the workforce curriculum that HCAI is designing for Community Health Workers / Promoter / Representatives to then adopt to support the public health sector. We look forward to this continuing partnership to continue to bridge and create economic opportunities for community members who have a wealth of experience in this field.

CHW/P/R Policy Coalition

Our efforts to create economic opportunity for community members in the field of CHW/P/R is multi-faceted. We understand that without a receptive policy and governmental environment that supports economic opportunity for some of the most disadvantaged community members, other efforts will find additional obstacles. In the spirit of this, we have actively contributed to the development of the CHW/P/R Policy Coalition policy agenda, with the intention of advancing our collective vision in 2024 and beyond.

Culturally-Appropriate, Affordable, and Healthy Local Foodways

Concrete and Critical Support Distribution Hub Network Efforts

Since the onset of the pandemic, we have continued to mobilize a network of Community Based Organization partners to provide basic food items, holiday celebratory meals and personal protective equipment throughout the BSR1 communities. In this last fiscal year alone, over 3,600 families across all four BSR1 communities have received 27,000 concrete and critical supports to sustain themselves.

We are grateful to our partners, for their unconditional partnership, hard work and commitment to the communities that we have the privilege to serve:

- 211 LA
- Homies Unidos
- Pensieve Foods
- All People's Community Center
- Karsh Center
- Richardson Park
- Comunidades Indígenas en Liderazgo
- Lift-LA
- South El Monte Community Center
- DoorDash
- Para Los Niños
- Worksite Wellness
- First Baptist Church of Los Angeles
- Pathways LA
- YMCA Maywood



3,600
Families Served



27,000
Supports Provided

Free, Safe, Clean, and Rapid Public Transportation

We partnered with Los Angeles Metro Transportation Authority (LA Metro) and Los Angeles Department of Transportation (LADOT) to identify Community Residents who live in South Los Angeles to participate in Mobility Wallet (MW), a pilot program oriented to the community of South Los Angeles that provides an all-in-one way to pay for multiple modes of transportation. The program, the largest of its kind in the nation, is administered by the Los Angeles County Metropolitan Transit Authority (Metro) and the Los Angeles Department of Transportation (LADOT).

The MW is a prepaid debit card that is loaded with \$150 per month for 12 months (May 2023 – April 2024) that allows one person, or several members of the same household, to pay for public or private transportation.

15 Best Start Metro LA (BSMLA) Community Partnership members are participating in this pilot program. This has been an incredible resource to families that use public transportation as their primary means of transportation to receive prenatal, pediatric and other medical care, attend school and work, shop for groceries, supplies and other household items, visit family, and other family and community activities.



The MW Prepaid debit card. Photo: LA Metro.

BSMLA Community Partnership and City of Los Angeles Council District 1



Councilmember Hernandez addressing community challenges. Photo: David Ng

On August 31, 2023, BSMLA Community Partnership Representatives coordinated a special session with Councilmember Eunisses Hernandez and her office to develop a strategic partnership to address urgent community priorities and align their long-term systems change efforts to improve the conditions for their children, neighbors, and communities.

Representatives from BSR1 were also present and ready to support. Together, they identified short and long-term strategies to partner on, to address the lack of quality, affordable, and accessible housing, and safety in their communities.

The session was a success thanks to the support provided by our partners at SAJE, LA Forward, Worksite Wellness LA and PLN's Youth Workforce Services and Community Transformation Team.

Field Building – County, State and National



PLN Community Transformation(CT) Team Members

2023 UnidosUS Annual Conference

In July, our Community Transformation Team attended the UnidosUS 2023 Annual Conference in Chicago, Illinois, where they were able to share and leverage community leadership development towards systems change strategies with other community leaders and public representatives across the nation.



BSR1 Community Representatives and PLN CT Team Members

Vision y Compromiso 21st Annual Conference

In November, BSR1 representatives attended the 21st Vision y Compromiso Annual Conference. This conference offers the opportunity for promoter and community health workers and leaders to learn, network, and celebrate the important work and contributions they make in their community.



CHLA, PLN CT and Guzman Translation and Interpretation Team Members

2023 American Public Health Association Annual Meeting and Expo

In November, we, along with CHLA, presented our Transforming Systems of Care work at the 2023 American Public Health Association Annual Meeting and Expo in Atlanta, Georgia. The team was able to speak to how Community Promoters, who work in partnership with Children's Hospital Los Angeles, address health disparities for patients and their families using culturally affirming support to navigate challenges to accessing care and introduce the soon to be published "Transforming Systems of Care Manual and Evaluation Framework," that will support health institutions to adopt our equity-centered model.



F5LA Housing Learning Dialogue Panelists in October 2023: Catalyst California, Long Beach Forward, Long Beach Residents Empowered, Para Los Niños, Rising Communities and The Children's Partnership.

First 5 LA

Informed by all BSR1 Community Partnerships, PLN was able to continue to partner with First 5 LA (F5LA) and participate in an inclusive process that informed the formation of F5LA's New 2025-2029 Strategic Plan. This new Strategic Plan reaffirms their commitment to creating a lasting and measurable impact, centering racial justice and equity in our work, and partnering with renewed urgency to create a future where young children and their families are prioritized in Los Angeles County and across the state.

Additionally, PLN partnered with F5LA by participating in Board Meeting and Learning Spaces Panels focused on our Community Transformation Model, expanding the role of Promoters in our efforts, the urgency to act in relation to housing inequity by presenting BSR1 Housing Collective Advocacy Efforts, and our sustainability plans moving forward.

Community Transformation Sustainability Plan



In partnership with Laura Valles and Associates, we hosted a series of engagement efforts with the BSR1 Community Partnerships and external partners, to receive input, recommendations, and concerns regarding our Community Transformation Sustainability Plan.

Overwhelmingly, the response to our guiding questions and reflections were positive. Participants expressed gratitude for us staying true to partnering and uplifting the community's best interests, the long-term commitment for close to 15 years, and for honoring the original Community Transformation vision. Participants also shared their eagerness to continue our partnership, and see themselves expanding our collaboration on many fronts, including being part of mission / vision aligned coalitions, deepening policy and systems change efforts, and sharing best practices on local, state, and national platforms.

We will reengage the BSR1 Community Partnerships and external partners in the new year to develop a Community Transformation five Year Strategic Plan that will incorporate their recommendations and action plans to achieve our collective goals.

Community Transformation Champions

Community Transformation Promoters



While incredibly impactful, gratifying and fulfilling, our work is admittedly complex and arduous. With that acknowledgement, we recognize all the community residents, partners and allies who are essential contributors to the efforts we have highlighted. We also recognize the people that by nature of our model, often support from the background, and are not often seen: The Community Transformation

Promoters at CHLA, PLN and those who have now joined other organizations across the County of Los Angeles.

Without their skillsets, commitment, adaptability, and drive, none of the work we highlighted would be possible to design, implement, and scale. They ensure that we create nurturing, community-building spaces and provide the necessary supports for community members, organizations, city and county departments, elected officials, businesses, and other stakeholders to join and share power to co-design, implement, communicate, mobilize and evaluate strategies to transform the systemic conditions that impact the ability of their communities to thrive.

We are thankful for your commitment, trust, and the love you provide for us all. We look forward to all that we will accomplish together in 2024!

Laura Valles, Chief Executive Officer, and Senior Consultant, Laura Valles and Associates



Laura Valles is a long-time collaborator and friend of PLN, who started with us as a capacity builder during the developmental phase of the BSMLA Community Partnership in 2010. Although she was brought in to primarily support with the development of the Community Partnership's governance structure, over the course of time, her role has evolved into that of an essential, strategic thought partner in all phases of our efforts, particularly as we have evolved, deepened, and scaled our Community Transformation Model and infrastructure.

Professionally, she provides us with the capacity strengthening / building and technical support necessary to take on our work, always approaching it with a humble, culturally affirming, and equitable lens. Personally, she has demonstrated the desire and the ability to see and invest in our individual and collective growth, purposefully cultivating deep, trusting, and impactful relationships with our team members and the communities we serve, by consistently demonstrating her integrity, passion and commitment for the work and the communities we serve and partner with.

Luis Pardo, Executive Director, Worksite Wellness LA



Over the course of Best Start Metro L.A.'s trajectory, beginning in 2012, there have been adjustments, partners have come and gone, and our approach has evolved. At least one, reliable, and essential constant, however, has been Luis Pardo, Executive Director of Worksite Wellness.

Luis is a critical contributing partner who helped develop BSMLA into a community partnership that values, above else, shared power amongst all stakeholders within the partnership, and that especially values and thrives, because of the leadership and power of community members.

Luis not only preaches BSMLA's values but lives them. As Executive Director of Worksite Wellness, Luis has sought to create economic opportunity for community members, hiring from the very communities his organization serves. He has invested in developing a workforce of Promoters, again working with the same community members he serves.

There is no opportunity to support that Luis has not taken on: From sitting as Chair and Co-Chair of BSMLA's Community Guidance Body (CGB), to supporting with the development of the BSR1 Driving Equity and Justice Community Bill of Human Rights, to serving as a co-master of ceremony with residents for various BSR1 celebratory events, and mobilizing his team and organization to respond to the deepening food insecurity in our communities during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Simply put, Luis SHOWS UP! Thank you, Luis, for your kindness, your smile, consistency, care, and commitment to our collective efforts. We look forward to your continued partnership and the impact we will have, together, moving forward. Thank you for being our champion.

Sandra Bryant, Former Executive Director, All Peoples Community Center



With lots of love, admiration, and gratitude for all of her years of service to our communities for over 40 years at All Peoples Community Center, on September 28th, we wished Sandra a happy and well-deserved retirement!

We are eternally grateful for all the hard work, leadership, and commitment Sandra contributed to help us develop the BSMLA Community Partnership in 2010. Her fearless and kind leadership ensured that those who are most impacted by systemic barriers, were at the helm of this work, ensuring that all of our efforts are informed and led by the strength and knowledge of our community.

Although we will miss her greatly, her legacy will live on in those she touched, including us, and the generations that follow!