



HIP's New Crowdfunding Platform Tops \$100,000 in Its 1st Campaign to Aid Latino Nonprofits

by Cheryl Brownstein-Santiago on June 23, 2014

(Editor's note: Cheryl Brownstein-Santiago is a California Aging Initiative fellow.)

A small Latino nonprofit in Oakland, CA, that has partnered with Hispanics in Philanthropy has been very successful at creating five women-owned cooperatives. When Women's Action to Gain Economic Security (WAGES) decided to apply its cooperative business model to the food industry to make and sell paletas, a Latino version of frozen pops, the lack of an industrial juicer stood in its way.

So WAGES Executive Director María Mercedes (Meche) Sansores and her staff decided to raise money for a \$1,500 juicer by using the latest technology, and they got more than they bargained for. They joined other small community-based organizations in the inaugural HIPGive.org crowdfunding campaign to raise money online for Latino nonprofits.

Before the one-month fundraising campaign was even half over, WAGES raised the \$1,500 for the juicer and went on to receive a total of \$1,905, with the rest of the money earmarked to buy other supplies. In the process, the nonprofit drew a whole new group of donors to its cause.

During its first contest, which lasted from April 15 to May 16th, the HIPGive crowdfunding platform allowed the 23 participating nonprofits to collectively raise \$107,090.91 in donations from individual donors. More than half, 57 percent, of the groups reached or exceeded their goals. Six won matching grants through support from the Western Union Foundation for nonprofits with the highest number of individual donors and who garnered the most support on social networking sites.

"It opened our eyes for the great potential fundraising opportunities for our organization," Sansores said in a written statement for this blog. "We were so stunned by how quickly our campaign reached its goal and the outpouring of support right away!"

"Before HIPGive, we hesitated to go the crowdfunding route," she added, "but this success gave us the confidence to do similar fundraisers in the future."

The HIPGive crowdfunding platform, the only such fundraising tool dedicated to serving the Latino civil sector, is planning a second campaign this fall for

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nonprofits in the area of education. But nonprofits interested in taking advantage of this crowdfunding opportunity can find guidelines and an application posted now at HIPGive.org. HIP staffers are also available to provide guidance from its Oakland, CA, headquarters.

"HIPGive.org is a place where our collective dollars, our collective spirit, and our collective ideas will make change," said HIP President Diana Campoamor said in launching the transnational platform. "HIPGive.org aims to make philanthropy more accessible to all people across the Americas," she added.

Sansores also saw an indirect benefit of the crowdfunding approach, inasmuch as its donor transparency highlights the generosity of spirit not only of philanthropists generally, but in the Latino community in particular.

"Probably most people don't know how much Latinos give in so many ways, and HIPGive emphasizes that to others," she said. "And even more important is that HIPGive encourages new generations to continue this tradition in our community and make our families and communities more visible."

And the juicer will be a very visible reminder of community support for the women worker-owners to have a sustainable livelihood in making and marketing paletas in the San Francisco Bay Area later this summer.

About HIPGive

HIPGive is an exciting new online giving platform that facilitates smart investments in innovation and Latino communities across the Americas. The organizations available for funding through HIPGive are pre-vetted and help underserved communities, providing an option for donors to make an impact within Latino communities through a click of a button. HIPGive is a project of Hispanics in Philanthropy.

Facebook.com/HIPGive

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HIP's mission is to strengthen Latino communities by increasing resources for the Latino and Latin American civil sector; increasing Latino participation and leadership throughout the field of philanthropy; and fostering policy change to enhance

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