Latin American Youth Center

2016 ANNUAL REPORT
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Dear Friends,

At Latin American Youth Center (LAYC) our days are always inspired by the accomplishments of our youth and families. We are proud to present you with our annual report for fiscal year 2016.

In this report you will meet our awesome youth, learn about their resilience and success, and read about our program outcomes.

From its humble volunteer, grassroots beginning in 1968 until today, LAYC has stayed true to its mission and values. Fifty years later we are a complex multiservice, multisite organization with a local, regional, and national reach. Yet our hopes and dreams for our youth have not changed or diminished over the years. We strive to do more, and we strive to do it better for the thousands of young people we serve and support annually. Most importantly, we continue to open the doors of opportunity for our youth to walk through and thrive.

The annual report also gives us the chance to thank all of our partners, including our individual donors, our many community collaborators, the philanthropic foundation and corporate community, and the government agencies we work with in the District of Columbia and Maryland. The list of LAYC supporters just gets longer and longer every year, and for that we say thank you and gracias!

The success of our youth is a result of your investment in our work. Their success is our collective success. Thank you for caring about young people and their families in our region. We hope you enjoy reading this report as much as we enjoy doing the work.

With warm regards and appreciation,

Lori Kaplan, President & CEO

Antonio Marquez, Chair, Board of Directors
In April 2016, the Promotor Pathway® and Urban Institute released the results of a five-year study of the impact of the model on the lives of disconnected and disengaged youth. At the event, Brett Theodos, a senior researcher at the Institute, reported that after participating in the program, Pathway participants were:

- Increased Persistence in School: 33%
- Reduced Child Births: 33%
- Increased Housing Stability: 60%
- 48 births: Control Group
- 18 births: Treatment Group
- 23 youth: Control Group
- 5 youth: Treatment Group

Overall, the Promotor Pathway is an example of what works for our communities. At the release, Michael Smith, special assistant to the president and senior director of cabinet affairs for President Obama’s My Brother’s Keeper initiative, asserted, “If we are going to make a real impact in communities, we need to invest where there is evidence of impact.” He then praised LAYC and the Pathway for “always looking out for the kid first.”

And now, the Promotor Pathway is going national. Initial partnerships have been established with organizations in Salem, Oregon, and Costa Mesa, California, and fundraising and planning are now under way to extend the program to other areas around the country. LAYC’s Promotor Pathway National Network seeks community-based organizations serving disconnected and high-risk populations of youth to obtain full training and materials necessary to engage Promotores in their communities. LAYC believes that sharing best practices and replicating a model with strong evidence of success can benefit the lives of youth across the country.
I plan to become a police officer and enroll in the Police Academy to work for the gang prevention unit in Washington, DC, and to help fellow undocumented Latinos. After completing my associate degree in law enforcement, I plan to pursue a bachelor’s degree in forensic science at Georgetown University. As an undocumented immigrant pursuing a law enforcement career in the U.S., I know I have some challenges to overcome. My immigration status is the largest barrier that prevents me from achieving my career goals. I know I have struggled with my mission before, but I have learned from my mistakes. The key to changing the world is education, and with the power of knowledge, I know I will achieve my goals.

FY16 OUTCOMES:

352 in-school and out-of-school youth were paired with a Promotor. 157 youth were employed and held a total of 215 separate jobs, with 175 jobs lasting more than 90 days. 184 youth reported practicing safe sex, and 188 youth did not present any substance abuse issues.
ACADEMICS: PATHWAYS TO SUCCESS

Middle Schools:
Our programs offer homework assistance, tutoring, and enrichment to increase wellness through activities such as African drumming, dance, hip hop, sports, arts and crafts, and gardening. Our students also receive character education and life skills through weekly workshops on topics such as stress management, anti-bullying, leadership, and financial literacy. Students in our Prince George’s County program obtain nutrition education workshops through our partnership with the University of Maryland Expanded Food and Nutrition Program.

High Schools:
Throughout the year, programs focus on providing students with the necessary tools and resources for them to be successful in school and after graduation. The program conducted a series of workshops in the fields of college preparation, job readiness training, health and fitness, and life skills. In addition, students had the opportunity to hear from various professionals from diverse backgrounds. Students participated in field trips to local museums and community events such as the annual LAYC/MMYC Haunted House.

Post-Secondary: Bard Class of 2016
After a year of hard work, challenging assignments, discussions, and reflection, the LAYC Bard College Clemente Class of 2016 celebrated the completion of the academic year. With the help of four faculty members, our students gained skills vital to thrive both inside and outside a classroom. Our goal was to equip students with tools to help them succeed in accomplishing their goals after the course and to become more civically engaged.

Prince George’s County Public Schools
- LAYC/MMYC served two middle schools and four high schools.
- We celebrated 13 graduations in FY16—all 13 are attending college or university.

District of Columbia Public Schools
- LAYC served three elementary schools, two middle schools, and two high schools.
- 414 students received an average of 61 hours of after-school homework assistance and enrichment activities.
When I came to this country in 2009 from El Salvador, my goals for my future began to change. Due to economic circumstances, I had to work two part-time jobs to support my family financially while attending high school. My desire to become a successful person in life made me take that challenge very seriously. During my senior year in high school, LAYC assisted me to apply for the New Futures Scholarship as well as other scholarships and grants. In 2012, I was awarded the New Futures Scholarship!

I’m currently in my senior year at the University of Maryland, pursuing my bachelor’s degree in criminology and criminal justice, with a concentration in terrorism, and a minor in U.S. Latina/o studies, with a concentration in sociology. In the summer of 2015, I began my internship experience with the police department. Also, my academic achievement allowed me to apply for the Honors Society, and in the fall, I was accepted for the National Criminology and Criminal Justice Honors Society.

I’ve always been very confident about my educational achievements, but there was one crucial step that kept me humble about my future: becoming a citizen of the United States. Nothing in my career could work without U.S. citizenship. Every single law enforcement agency in the United States requires their applicants to be U.S. citizens to be eligible for the job. Although I was ready to apply for my naturalization process, I found myself in an economic struggle and unable to pay the $680 application fee. As is the case for many immigrants, becoming a U.S. citizen is life changing. During the fall of 2015, I heard about LAYC’s DREAMER scholarship. Luckily, I received the DREAMER scholarship, and I was able to apply for U.S. citizenship. In February 2016, I took the exam and became a U.S. citizen!

Since that day, I have accomplished so much. I just learned that I was accepted for an internship with the federal Air Marshall Service this upcoming summer. I don’t know what lies ahead, but I do know that my future is bright. This is all possible because of the donors and the people behind these great opportunities. I really thank LAYC, the DREAMER scholarship, and all the people who made my dream possible.
ARTS & CULTURE

Latin American Youth Center co-hosted Todas Las Manos, an afternoon of poetry, music, and inspired conversation in memory of Orlando Letelier and Ronni Karpen Moffitt, on Sunday, September 11, 2016. In collaboration with the American University (AU) Museum at the Katzen Center, the AU Institute of Policy Studies, and Aviva Kempner, a reception and artist tour of the mural installation Todas las Manos followed at the AU Museum Sculpture Garden.

Todas las Manos lead artist Francisco Letelier, son of Orlando Letelier, hosted the cultural event, which featured prominent figures in Chilean and international arts and politics, including:

- Joe Eldridge, human rights activist and co-founder of the Washington Office on Latin America,
- Patricio Zamorano, Chilean singer-songwriter,
- Peter Kornbluh, author of *The Pinochet File: A Declassified Dossier on Atrocity and Accountability* and director of the Chile documentation project at the National Security Archive,
- Aviva Kempner, award-winning filmmaker and director of the Ciesla Foundation,
- Quique Aviles, Salvadoran poet and performer,
- John Cavanagh, director of the Institute for Policy Studies, and
- Lori Kaplan, president & CEO of Latin American Youth Center.

Todas Las Manos commemorates the 40th anniversary of the assassinations of Francisco’s father, former Chilean Ambassador Orlando Letelier, and co-worker Ronni Karpen Moffitt. The large-scale installation depicts Orlando Letelier, Ronni Karpen Moffitt, Rodrigo Rojas, and other victims of Pinochet’s dictatorship. Rodrigo Rojas was a young photographer who was burned alive upon his return to Chile, during a street demonstration against the dictatorship. Rodrigo was 18 at the time of his death. He was a student at Wilson High School in northwest Washington and an art and media program participant at LAYC, as are the young people who worked with Francisco Letelier on the mural. Letelier, an internationally known muralist based in Venice, California, and LAYC young artists began working on the installation in early August 2016; it was on display through October 23, 2016. LAYC is proud that young artists from its art and media program worked with Francisco Letelier on the Todas Las Manos mural.
The project was a wonderful opportunity for our youth to focus on human rights and social justice issues while learning about many leaders who have fought for the rights of others. It was also very special for our young people to meet the President of Chile and to be a part of this very unique art and social justice project.
In FY16, 61 participants became ready for employment and entered the job development phase of the program.

210 youth in Maryland (195 in MoCo; 15 in PG) gained work experience through internships with local employers.

48 youth earned their GED (29 in MoCo; 8 in PG; 11 in DC)

120 youth and 38 employers attended the LAYC/MMYC Summer Youth Connect Networking Breakfast, a networking opportunity for youth and employers participating in the Summer Youth Connect Internship program.

93% of participants who completed the program demonstrated an increase in GED practice scores or in literacy or numeracy CASAS assessment.

69% of Corps members were employed and/or involved in further education and training within six months of ending participation in the program.
[MCCC staff] Jimmy was not only a great mentor to me, but also a great teacher. I didn’t know the importance of the jobs we do in the Corps until Jimmy helped me to understand conservation and the things I can do to help preserve and protect our environment, for example, removing invasive species and recycling things like water bottles. I also started to have an easier time in class. I did better at subjects that I was never good at before. Learning was actually more fun and easy. My fellow Corps members are amazing people as well. We motivated each other to do our best and kept pushing each other to do better. It took me almost a year, but I finally passed the last section of the GED in September 2016 and obtained my diploma.
SAFE HOUSING

- Number of youth provided with safe housing in FY16: 82
- Number of foster care youth placed with families: 29
- Number of foster care youth in LAYC independent living housing: 17
- Number of host or foster families partnering with LAYC: 22

Drop-In Center

In 2016, LAYC won IKEA’s Life Improvement Challenge, which gives charities and institutions nationwide the materials to update and upgrade their infrastructure. After a spirited campaign for votes on IKEA’s website, LAYC won the contest! The prize enabled LAYC to dream up a resource missing from its core services: a supply closet where homeless youth could access essential items. Drop-in Center staff worked with IKEA College Park who helped design, renovate, and transform a garage space into a needed resource. IKEA donated the furniture and staff volunteers built and installed it. Hope’s Closet is also outfitted with day lockers for youth to store their belongings while they use the Drop-in Center’s other facilities, which include showers, washers and dryers, nap rooms, kitchen and dining room, computer lab, and private counseling rooms.

YOUTH SPOTLIGHT: WILSON

Thanks to Lori, the board of directors, and staff of Latin American Youth Center for all the support they have given me. They gave me clothes, furniture for my room, and a little money to help me with rent. And they made me feel confident and hopeful that I could overcome challenging times. Thank you to Armando Trull for making me smile at Christmas when he and his friends invited me to celebrate with them. I also want to thank the Sandino family for hosting me in their home while I looked for a place to live. All these people are my heroes. I want to share that I recently received my work permit, and I started a new job. My next goal is to graduate from high school next summer.
HEALTH AND WELLNESS

- In FY16, 546 youth were tested for HIV and STIs through our Counseling, Testing, Referrals, and Linkages Program.
- 12 youth participated in the Teen Health Promoters program.
- 50 youth receiving tutoring and other programming through the Teen Center.
- 401 youth attended Teen Center activities and events.

On March 24, 2016, the Teen Health Promoters and their health care professional mentors gathered to talk about fitness and put their discussion in action with a Zumba class. The class began with everyone sharing their favorite form of fitness. Each mentor/mentee pair led the group in a stretch and then brainstormed costs and benefits of exercise, ways to make time for fitness, and barriers to working out. The students blew us away with their thoughtful analysis of the social determinants of health that prevent people from exercising.

Young Parents Program

33 young parents participated in parenting skills workshops and paired with a parenting mentor to support their learning. The young mothers and fathers received case management services and connections to resources, and they demonstrated numerous steps towards self-sufficiency.
Brenda, 17, always though she’d become a doctor. That was at the beginning of her experience in LAYC’s Teen Health Promoters program, which trains high school students to be peer health educators and participate in clinical or educational internships with local clinics or hospitals. Today, Brenda plans to become a public health researcher focusing on sexually transmitted infections in low-income communities. She owes her new aspirations to her mentor, Maximilian, who specializes in global health at a government agency and introduced Brenda to the varied career paths in health care. The program pairs students with professionals in the field, such as Maximilian, to support the students’ exploration of real-world careers in health care. Brenda’s internship at La Clínica Del Pueblo is all about the workings of the front office, where she answers phones, greets patients, and observes other front office functions, such as medical billing. She is especially enjoying being able to help Spanish-speaking patients.

“I really like interacting with patients. I like to help people, especially those that need Spanish translation. It can be frustrating to not be able to explain what’s wrong to a doctor. I translate for my mom and want to continue to do that for others.”
LAYC gratefully acknowledges the support of hundreds of donors and partners, large and small, individual and institutional. Their commitment to youth and their trust in LAYC made this work possible.

Individuals

Alan Abramson
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Patrick Ahern
Peter Ahern
Candice Ahwah Gonzalez
Larry & Nonie Akman
Gabriel & Catherine Albornoz
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Shirley Allen
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Allison Alt
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**Latin American Youth Center**

LAYC serves youth ages 16-24 from all backgrounds, including low-income youth, teen parents, homeless youth, youth in foster care and juvenile justice systems, and those facing mental health, substance abuse, or complex family issues.

**GENDER**

- **52% (2,176)** FEMALE
- **48% (1,979)** MALE

**AGE RANGE**

- **0-9**
  - 5% (196)
- **10-18**
  - 56% (2,310)
- **19-24**
  - 34% (1,430)
- **25+**
  - 5% (219)

**LANGUAGE SPOKEN AT HOME**

- **ENGLISH 40% (1,635)**
- **SPANISH 32% (1,338)**
- **ENGLISH & SPANISH 16% (668)**
- **OTHER 12% (514)**

**ETHNICITY/RACE**

- **LATINO 59% (2,444)**
- **AFRICAN AMERICAN 32% (1,336)**
- **OTHER 9% (375)**

**WARD/COUNTY OF RESIDENCE**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ward</th>
<th>Count</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ward 1</td>
<td>22% (910)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ward 2</td>
<td>2% (101)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ward 3</td>
<td>2% (65)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ward 4</td>
<td>21% (874)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ward 5</td>
<td>6% (244)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ward 6</td>
<td>2% (72)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ward 7</td>
<td>3% (140)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ward 8</td>
<td>4% (160)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Montgomery</td>
<td>8% (349)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prince George's</td>
<td>25% (1,026)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>5% (214)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**COUNTRY OF BIRTH**

- **UNITED STATES 65% (2,730)**
- **MEXICO CARIBBEAN CENTRAL AMERICA 23% (932)**
- **AFRICAN NATIONS 2% (92)**
- **OTHER 10% (401)**

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