

# A LETTER FROM LAAMISTAD LEADERSHIP

## Dear LaAmistad Family,

As we reflect on the past year, the world has continued to change in unexpected ways, especially in the aftermath of a global pandemic that affected each of our lives. On behalf of our students and families, we thank you for your kindness and generosity as it continues to bring our community together, while also making positive changes in the lives of others.

Change for the better has always been an essential part of our work. This year, as we returned to in-person programming, we embraced it by hiring Reading Specialists for each of our six DeKalb County Afterschool locations. Our students made incredible gains in reading fluency, exceeding our wildest hopes. We also opened the doors to the LaAmistad Community Center – a space conceived and built as a haven for learning, empowerment and support for adult learners.

And while we continue to use the utmost care in response to the changing needs of our community in new and dynamic ways, we remain dedicated to our holistic approach to education that encompasses the many factors impacting school-age students and their families. We have continued to faithfully manage the resources so generously provided by our donors so that with the help of our partners, dedicated parents, and selfless volunteers, LaAmistad can continue to produce positive outcomes that change lives. As we spread the word about our work, these victories are only possible because of your ongoing commitment and support of our mission. We simply could not do this without you.

In this report, we illuminate the power and spirit of community through LaAmistad's work; the Latino community we serve remains our inspiration, and we hope you too are inspired as we join hands to build the leaders of tomorrow.

Yours in service,

Cat McAfee
Executive Director

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## Leadership

Cat McAfee, Executive Director Nina Reid, Associate Director Terri Tubbs, Development Director Mario Corea, Program Director



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Our Mission
is to prepare
Latino students
and families for
success through
academic and
life enrichment
programs.

Our Vision
is that Latino
students and
families achieve
life-long
self-sufficiency.

# **Our Values**

- Kindness
- Excellence
- Passion
- Perseverance
- Teamwork



### About the Community We Serve

Only 26% of Hispanic students in Georgia are reading proficiently or above grade level by the third grade. They also graduate from high school at much lower rates than their black and white peers (Georgia Partnership for Excellence in Education). And while Latinx families have one of the highest workforce participation rates, they are more likely than others to live in poverty. Literacy and math skills are crucial to academic success but language barriers, access to information, scarce resources, and limited literacy create challenges that can only be overcome through a holistic approach that addresses the unique needs of the Latinx students and families we serve.

# Programs Summary

LaAmistad exists to provide holistic and culturally-responsive support to Latinx elementary school students and their families. Our core program, LaAmistad Afterschool, focused on increasing math and reading fluency, homework support, building strong character, and self-confidence. This year's enhancements included the addition of Reading Specialists to close the literacy gap exacerbated by the pandemic and a hybrid model that provided one-on-one tutoring to select students.

During our **Anímate Summer Academies**, educators stemmed the loss of academic gains made throughout the school year with intensive lessons while public and private community partners provided students access to enrichment activities that are generally only available to more affluent peers.

All year, LaAmistad families were supported through our **Parent Partnership** which provides cost-free workshops, newsletters, and training at the newly constructed LaAmistad Community Center, all delivered entirely in Spanish. Since going entirely online this year, our family and education-centered workshops have experienced unprecedented attendance and engagement.

Through our **English for Successful Living** (ESL) classes, LaAmistad parents, as well as language learners in the Metro Atlanta community and across the state, studied English virtually. The online ESL classes gave previously unavailable access to our highly effective English language course and strengthened participants' digital literacy skills.

### Afterschool Spotlight – Dilan

Nine-year-old Dilan and his family moved from Colombia to the U.S. five years ago. Like many Latino families, they relocated in search of a better future for their children. When Dilan first enrolled in school, his teachers noticed his difficulty with speech and reading beyond the language barrier he was overcoming. Unfortunately, during this time, Dilan's dad was diagnosed with cancer. Balancing health issues while attending to Dilan's educational needs became increasingly difficult for Dilan's parents.



When Dilan joined LaAmistad
Afterschool, his reading level was
two years behind his grade level. Our
dedicated and trained staff began
working with him daily and focused on
his unique learning needs. Dilan made
leaps and bounds of progress, which
allowed him to improve an entire grade
level and increase his self-confidence to
the point that he now shares what he
has learned with others.

# LaAmistad Community Center



On April 27th, we opened the 2,000 sq. foot LaAmistad Community Center (LCC) in Sandy Springs to host Adult Education classes including ESL, technology, parenting workshops and much more. The LCC has been well received by the community; parents have expressed their excitement at the new neighborhood space which includes access to computers, meeting rooms, and community events. We are grateful for our donors who made the LCC possible, including our corporate sponsors, AssuranceAmerica and Aaron's.

"We had a planning meeting for future parent classes at the LCC. I felt included and that my opinion matters." – Francisca Aquirre

"I think learning a new language takes a lot of effort, but the teachers are excellent quides." - Oralia Rios

### **ESL Spotlight – Oralia Rios**



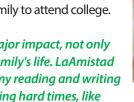
Suzanne W. Schirber LaAmistad Scholarships

#### Maria Marquez Gatica

Atlanta Classical Academy alumni and current Oglethorpe University student Maria Marquez Gatica has a history with LaAmistad that spans back to her third-grade year. Maria was born in Mexico and immigrated to the U.S. at 11 years old. She is now the first in her family to attend college.

"LaAmistad has made a major impact, not only in my life but also in my family's life. LaAmistad taught me how to better my reading and writing and helped my family during hard times, like

during the pandemic, by providing food and helping with other needs. I was raised in a low-income home, but the support LaAmistad provided made me realize that I was fortunate to have people like them by my side."





L to R: Daniela Ramirez, 2018 Recipient, Cat McAfee, and Selina Vazquez

#### Selina Vazquez

While at Cristo Rey, Selina Vazquez was recognized for her leadership, character, and integrity. She currently studies Finance at Georgia Southern University, the first in her family to pursue higher education.

"LaAmistad is where I grew up, created lifelong friendships with my peers around me, and was a place where I could be myself and do homework with students who also looked like me and had similar backgrounds. I am a first-generation Latina from a family where neither parent completed high school. My parents did everything in their power to ensure that I had a better life, and my way of repaying them is by demonstrating to others that dreams do come true."

Oralia Rios' journey from Mexico is an inspiring story of resilience and tenacity. After arriving in Atlanta, Oralia knew learning English would increase her prospective job opportunities, but learning a second language as an adult isn't easy – so she began taking ESL classes with LaAmistad to learn this necessary skill. The classes started as an uphill battle, as she found that conjugating verbs was a challenge, but with encouragement from her teachers, daily practice, and consistent work, she quickly conquered these obstacles and advanced in the course.

Oralia progressed through 6 sessions and credited her ability to speak English confidently to our ESL teachers' enthusiasm and commitment to teaching. According to her, "It didn't even feel like hard work because they made the classes so enjoyable". Since starting the program, Oralia has used her newfound expertise to secure a position caring for the elderly, where she enjoys further practicing her English skills.



sites across Metro Atlanta 1,000+
clients served





program hours

**Afterschool Reading Fluency** 

improved by an average of

120%



**Afterschool Math Fluency** 

improved by an average of

193%

264
adult English
learners





10,600+

volunteer hours

270
hours
of summer
camp



#### STATEMENTS OF FINANCIAL POSITION

•••••	June 30, 2022	
•••••	\$1,484,941	
	\$124,384	
	\$9,031	

\$462,846

\$2,081,202

#### **Liabilities and Net Assets**

**Total assets** 

Property and equipment, net

Cash and cash equivalents Certificates of deposit Prepaid expenses

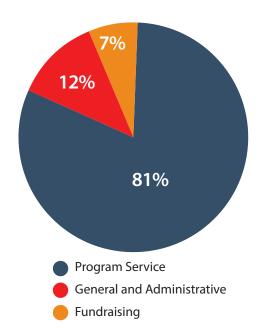
**Assets** 

\$44,450
\$32,900
\$77,350
•
\$1,511,131
\$492,721
\$2,003,852
\$2,081,202

#### **FY2022 Expenses**

\$1,701,813 **Program Services** General and Administrative \$248,786 **Fundraising** \$140,232

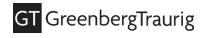
TOTAL: \$2,090,831





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