



CULTIVANDO

Leadership • Advocacy • Collaboration

ANNUAL IMPACT REPORT



Cultivating the Resilient Roots of Tomorrow

A WORD FROM OUR LEADERS

Message from the Board Chair



In times of uncertainty and rapid change, organizations like Cultivando remind us of something essential: community is our greatest source of resilience.

For more than two decades, Cultivando has nurtured the leadership, wisdom, and dignity of Latino families in Colorado. Our mission-to cultivate the leadership of our community so families can shape the systems that impact their lives continues to guide this work with clarity and purpose. Or as we often say, *cultivando liderazgo, salud y justicia desde la comunidad*. This past year, we witnessed the power of that mission in motion.

- Through the Promotora model, Cultivando nurtures trusted community leaders who connect families to resources, civic participation, and the tools to advocate for their communities.
- Cultivando's early childhood work supports families with culturally responsive resources, creating environments where children grow with a deep sense of belonging and their identities celebrated.
- Cultivando stands alongside lideres facing environmental injustice and growing
- Industrial pressures, ensuring communities shape decisions about the air, water, and future they share.
- Gatherings like EcoFiesta, Día de los Muertos, and Latino Heritage Month remind us that culture is the soil from which resilience grows nourished by shared memory, music, and storytelling.

None of this work happens alone. Cultivando's impact is made possible by the dedication of staff, the leadership of Promotoras, the partnership of local organizations and public agencies, and most importantly, the trust of families who continue to show up for one another with generosity and courage.

As Board Chair, I am deeply inspired by what I see across this community. Even in the face of economic pressures, environmental inequities, and shifting political landscapes, our community continues to care for one another, organize together, and imagine a healthier future.

Cultivando reminds us that real change grows from relationship-*de la tierra, de la cultura, y de la comunidad*. When we invest in people, nurture leadership, and honor the wisdom already present in our neighborhoods, we create the conditions for communities to thrive. Together, we will continue cultivating that future- for our children, our elders, and the generations still to come.

Con gratitud y solidaridad,

Beatriz Oliva Soto, Board Chair



Letter from the Chief Executive Officer



Dear Community, Partners, and Supporters,

It is with deep gratitude and pride that I reflect on the past year at Cultivando. Together, we have not only met but exceeded our programmatic goals, demonstrating the power of community-driven work and the impact of collective commitment to health, equity, and opportunity.

Over the past year, we have expanded our efforts to support families navigating mental health needs, ensuring that individuals and families have access to culturally responsive resources, education, and care. We have continued to invest in early childhood education, recognizing that strong beginnings lay the foundation for lifelong well-being. Our Promotora program has reached new heights. In addition to trainings held across Colorado, we proudly brought our model to a national stage for the first time in our history, hosting trainings in San Antonio, Texas. This milestone reflects both the strength of our approach and the growing recognition of the importance of community health workers in advancing health equity.

We also celebrated a major milestone with the Latino Engagement Task Force, marking its 10-year anniversary. Over the past decade, this initiative has created meaningful opportunities for ongoing civic engagement, empowering community members to raise their voices, shape policy, and advocate for lasting change. Our commitment to environmental justice remains steadfast. We continue working to uplift community voices, address environmental inequities, and advocate for healthier, safer environments where all families can thrive.

Throughout all of this work, Cultivando remains unwavering in our commitment to being a trusted and reliable source of information and support for our community. We recognize that these political times are difficult and, at times, deeply challenging. Yet, we also see- every day- the strength, resilience, and unity of our community. Together, we continue to move forward with purpose, working to empower one another and improve the health and well-being of our families, our broader community, and our environment.

Our team remains grounded in and committed to Cultivando's mission: to promote healthy people and environments through education, collaboration, and social change. This mission guides every program, every partnership, and every step we take. None of this work would be possible without the unwavering support of our Board of Directors, whose leadership and guidance continue to strengthen our organization. We are equally grateful to our funders and partners who believe in our vision and continue to invest in our work and our community. Thank you for standing with us, for believing in this work, and for helping us build a healthier, more just future.

With gratitude,

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading 'Olga González'.



Olga González, Chief Executive Officer

LEADING WITH INTENTION



MISSION

Cultivando is an organization that uplifts the leadership of our community to promote healthy people and environments through education, collaboration, and social change.

VISION

All of us have the power to create and transform just and humane social systems that provide opportunities for our communities to thrive.

APPROACH

Cultivando builds communities where residents become changemakers. For more than two decades, we have supported Latino families across Globeville, Elyria, Swansea, Commerce City, and North Denver to advocate for their health, wellness, and environment. From environmental justice to early childhood education to emotional wellness, our work is rooted in the belief that real change grows from relationships, from the wisdom already present in our neighborhoods, and from the leaders we nurture together. We strive to create change that is sustainable and multigenerational, cultivating empowered leadership, good health, and justice for our community.



IMPACT AT A GLANCE



\$1,132,325
Total Revenue in 2025

Cultivando thrives largely through the generous support of philanthropic and nonprofit partners. In fact, a remarkable 95% of our revenue is sourced from these alliances. These partnerships are the lifeblood of Cultivando, enabling it to continue our mission and expand our positive impact on our community.

Where Our Support Comes From

\$743,500

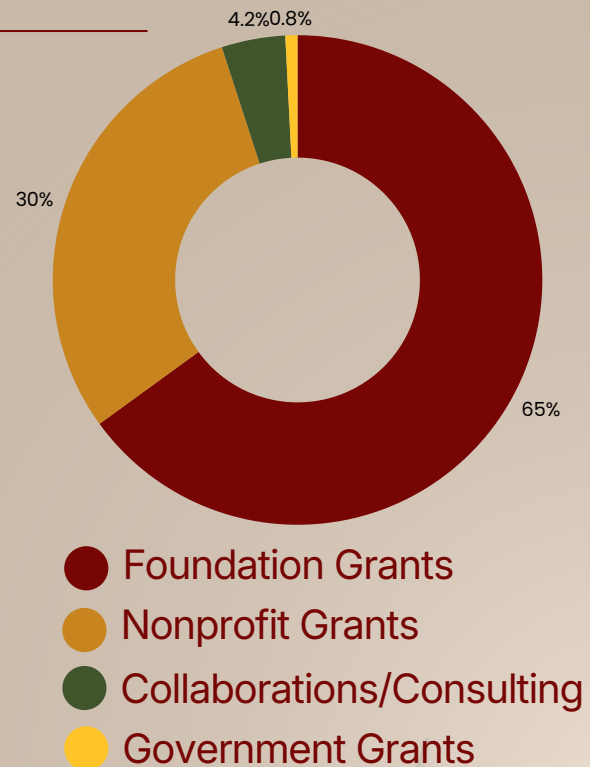
From foundation grants

\$335,035

From Nonprofit Partners
and Collaborative Grants

\$57,916

Generated through
partnerships and consulting



Community Contributions

Individual Donations \$27,348

Corporate Contributions \$15,500

Raised through EcoFiesta \$17,082

SOMOS LA FUERZA UNIDA



Mobilizing Authentic Leaders with the Promotora Model

Cultivando's Promotoras have always been at the heart of our work and their communities. They are trusted neighbors who take on leadership roles, connect people, and create real change. This year, Cultivando took a big step by bringing this community-focused model to areas beyond Colorado. In November, we led a series of Cultivando's Promotora Trainings in San Antonio, Texas, with support from the Office of Sustainability. These sessions helped local environmental justice leaders from different grassroots groups develop a shared strategy for their work. The training combined key ideas of environmental justice with practical tools for community involvement, helping participants see how environmental issues affect community health. After that, they looked at specific ways to organize, advocate, and work toward healthier, more sustainable community efforts.

This growth shows what Cultivando has always believed: our Promotora model succeeds because it is built on trust, cultural ties, and the real-life experiences of the people we serve. Community members know the challenges that they and their neighbors face, which makes them the strongest drivers of change in their own neighborhoods, wherever they might live. By supporting leaders outside of our home area, Cultivando is helping to build a wider network of advocates for healthy people and environments. The work that started in Commerce City and in the Globeville, Elyria, and Swansea (GES) community is spreading further, showing that when we strengthen our communities, we create real change.





Stronger Together: Community, Collaboration, and Connection

Through our partnership with the City of Commerce City, Promotoras have built a consistent, welcoming presence at the Commerce City Recreation Center, connecting families with resources and inviting residents to participate in events and services that meet their needs. This steady relationship-building, bridges families with the local institutions and public spaces that belong to them, fostering a sense of belonging, cultural pride, and equitable access for all.

In 2025, Hispanic Heritage Month and Día de los Muertos were co-designed with residents in partnership with the Commerce City Police Department to honor our cultural identity and priorities. Through the leadership of our Promotoras and in partnership with Commerce City, families gathered to honor their cultural traditions, strengthen community bonds, and build lasting relationships with city leaders and public safety partners, creating a space where everyone truly felt included.



500+ community members came out to celebrate the 2025 Hispanic Heritage Month Celebration and Día de los Muertos Event. This was made possible through the local engagement of Promotoras, who worked with residents to create celebrations truly centered on their community.



Latino Engagement Task Force

Since 2015, Cultivando and Commerce City have partnered through the Latino Engagement Task Force (LET) to ensure Latino residents have a real and sustained voice in how their community grows, so that expansion never comes at the expense of those facing language barriers, mixed documentation status, social isolation, or historical underrepresentation. By engaging stakeholders across the community, city departments, and agencies such as the Commerce City Police Department, LET has built a collaborative channel of communication to address evolving community needs.

In the future, experienced members will mentor new residents and help create a strong network of local civic leaders. As Commerce City grows, the Latino Engagement Task Force shows that real progress happens when every resident has the chance to succeed and diversity is truly valued.

“Participating in LET helped me understand that my voice also counts in city decisions. Now I know how to share information with my neighbors and how to get involved to improve our community.”

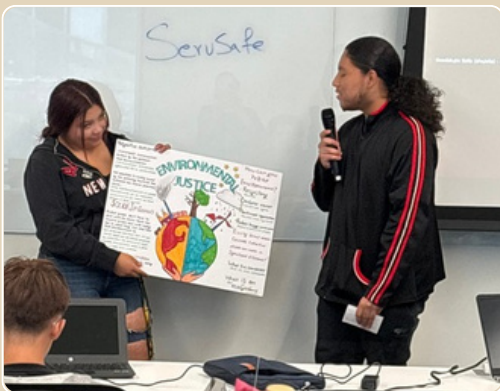
-LET participant



Youth Leadership in Environmental Spaces

This past summer marked the third annual Environmental Justice Youth Internship, welcoming 14 young people ages 13 to 19 from North Denver and Commerce City. Over three weeks, youth reconnected with the natural world, deepened their understanding of environmental justice, and traveled to Cortez, Colorado, where they learned from elders from the Ute Mountain Ute Nation about Indigenous land stewardship and expansive ecologies. From composting at home to advocating in community meetings with public leaders, interns took meaningful action to advance planet-and people-centered solutions.

Through a partnership with Words to Power, youth used spoken word poetry to draw on the resilience and determination passed down from their ancestors, giving voice to eco-anxiety while building mental health and leadership skills that will carry them forward. From a poem written by one of our participants: **“The strength of my roots allows me to withstand the storm of life, grounding me in who I am”** - Reina, 17, youth internship graduate.



EMPOWERING CAREGIVERS, STRENGTHENING FAMILIES THROUGH EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION

Cultivando's Early Childhood Education (ECE) program is built on years of trusted, community-based work in Commerce City. For many years, we have worked closely with families, offering programs, education, and leadership opportunities that reflect the community's strengths. In 2025, we brought this work to the Globeville, Elyria, and Swansea (GES) communities, using what we know works and staying focused on what families need.

We believe that parents and caregivers are a child's first and most important teachers. By supporting them, especially Family, Friend, and Neighbor (FFN) providers, we help create safe and nurturing places for young children to grow and learn. This support matters even more in communities where childcare is expensive, waitlists are long, and there are few options that reflect families' cultures and languages.

Academia FFN

75 Family, Friend, and Neighbor (FFN) providers participated in professional development through Academia FFN, Cultivando's training program, designed specifically for caregivers who are often the backbone of informal child care in their communities. Workshops covered topics such as; autism awareness, early learning, and how to talk with children to prevent abuse.

24 FFN providers earned certifications in CPR and first aid.



Visitas en Casa

This summer, Cultivando's team made **20** one-on-one home visits to FFN providers throughout GES, offering personalized support right where caregivers live and work. They talked about child safety, nutrition, active play, and early development. Caregivers learned easy and fun ways to help children thrive, like making colorful meals together, trying new fruits and vegetables, enjoying family meals without screens, and adding movement to daily routines through dance, nature walks, and creative play.

“Home visits help us feel that we are not alone. We learn new ideas to better care for children, and we also feel that someone recognizes our work.”

— FFN Provider, GES Community

Abriendo Puertas

14 FFN caregivers finished Abriendo Puertas, a proven parent leadership program that helps families find their way through new systems. Instead of teaching caregivers to become their children's first teachers, it reminds them they already are. Participants learned about early literacy, social-emotional growth, health, and getting ready for school, while also building confidence and advocacy skills to support their families.



CULTIVATING RESILIENCE THROUGH EMOTIONAL WELLNESS

Circulo de Mujeres

Circulo de Mujeres developed out of Cultivando's promotora leadership model, "Cultivando mi Voz," which helps strengthen leadership and communication skills among women from our community. This program gives women a place to come together, share their stories, and build connections across generations. This year, 50 women shared their personal stories through creative projects and group activities, helping them grow stronger emotionally and to connect with their cultural roots. The sessions included making vision boards, sewing, crafts, journaling, playing Lotería, aromatherapy, mindful walks in nature, and activities such as recycling and gardening focused on caring for the environment. With support from the Colorado Health Institute, participants also met with a licensed therapist who led group discussions and shared tools for emotional strength and healing. Every woman left with something useful to take home and share with others.

**"It is a space where I can open my mind
and my heart."**

- Circulo de Mujeres Participant



Bienestar Emocional

Bienestar Emocional connected with **313 participants** through online workshops focused on important family issues. The sessions covered topics like immigration rights, financial empowerment, tax credits, fraud prevention, cancer prevention, youth safety, and environmental awareness. One community meeting also brought neighbors and local law enforcement officers together for open discussions about safety, flock cameras, and ICE presence in Commerce City. Over several months, participants said the program made them feel more confident talking with their children about tough subjects, handling complex systems, and taking care of their own emotional health as caregivers.

COMMUNITY VOICE SHAPING ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE

Policy and Advocacy for Environmental Justice

For over 25 years, Cultivando has organized alongside Latino and immigrant families in Commerce City, and the neighborhoods of Globeville, and Elyria-Swansea to address disproportionate pollution burdens. In 2025, our deep roots and respect in the community translated into direct action across three interconnected efforts, each made stronger through the partnerships that make this work possible.

Partnership with Coalition Organized for Clean Air (COCA)

Cultivando submitted a coordinated coalition letter to the Air Pollution Control Division alongside more than 30 community testimonies as part of a Community-Led Public Comment Campaign on Air Toxics Permitting. The effort called for health-based standards, cumulative impact analysis, and accountability for both new and existing pollution sources. Collaborators included the GreenHouse Connection Center, student partners from the University of Colorado Anschutz and the University of Denver, Adams County, and broader COCA coalition partners. Residents shared firsthand experiences with asthma, headaches, nausea, and long-term health concerns, shifting the conversation from abstract risk thresholds to the real, cumulative impacts carried by their communities every day.



Perhaps the most significant policy milestone of 2025 was Cultivando's formal participation in the Regulation 30 rulemaking process. Beginning in January, Cultivando joined as a formal party through COCA alongside the GreenHouse Connection Center while receiving legal support from the University of Denver Environmental Law Clinic and former State Senator and Attorney Mike Foote. This marked a turning point: rather than offering public comment from the outside, Cultivando and its partners were now seated at the table, with commissioners required to respond directly to community testimony. Across two phases, more than 20 community leaders and stakeholders engaged through COCA, resulting in the identification of five priority toxic air contaminants and the adoption of health-based standards for all five, including a 1 in 1,000,000 cancer risk threshold – a very strict threshold already adopted in states including California. Community testimony also contributed to the inclusion of Hydrogen Sulfide as a regulated pollutant despite heavy industry party opposition.

"Our lives are no less important than the profits of a few companies. Health is not negotiable. The right to live in a clean and healthy environment is a basic human right."

- Maria Zubiarte, community leader and Promotora



Enviromental Justice Tours

Advocacy does not stop at a written comment. Through two Environmental Justice Tours in October and December, Cultivando joined and hosted events that brought residents face-to-face with elected officials and candidates for office. Cultivando and community leaders joined the Toxic Tour, hosted by key partners, to educate the attorney general and gubernatorial candidates on local environmental issues, including pollution from the Suncor oil refinery and the rapid expansion of industrial infrastructure such as data centers. Over 75 participants joined across our community, grassroots, grasstops, and partner networks. In December, Cultivando hosted its own EJ Tour at the Johnson Recreation Center in North Denver, where 9 sitting state legislators, 3 aides, and 13 community members gathered to continue that conversation.

Together, these events created space for reflection and open dialogue, planting seeds and building relationships between impacted residents and decision-makers that lasting policy change requires.

For participants across all three efforts, the experience was transformative. Community members saw their voices shape real outcomes in formal policy spaces, strengthening the confidence and capacity to keep advocating for healthier communities through increased protections from polluters. That foundation carries into 2026, as the relationships and strategies built throughout this year directly inform Cultivando's continued engagement in permitting reform, legislative follow-up, and Phase 3 of Regulation 30.

Landfill Awareness, Composting, Recycling, and Gardening



In partnership with Our Lady Mother of the Church and with support from Full Circle Future, families learned about the realities of landfill emissions before moving into hands-on sessions on composting, recycling, and sustainable gardening. The program wove into existing Cultivando programming, including our Environmental Justice Youth Internship, Circulo de Mujeres, and Academia FFN, widening its reach across generations.

Participants received seeds and the chance to win a gardening starter kit, and Promotoras reported that many families began putting their new skills to use in their own gardens at home.



Tree Planting

In partnership with Wildland Restoration Volunteers, Cultivando brought more than 30 participants together across five workshops and three school plantings from March through October. Trees were planted at South Commerce City parks, the Rocky Mountain Arsenal, and Adams County School District 14 schools. Families learned proper planting techniques and brought them home to beautify their own neighborhoods. The pride in our community members' faces upon completing these projects speaks for itself.

Both programs carry strong momentum into 2026, with families already excited about expanding their home gardens, planning to plant more trees in their neighborhoods, and plans for pocket forests in South Commerce City already taking root.



150+ trees planted in local school and parks

Fifth Annual EcoFiesta

This September, Cultivando hosted its fifth annual EcoFiesta, bringing together over 75 community members, partners, sponsors, and supporters. EcoFiesta celebrated the strength and joy of families in Commerce City and surrounding areas to advance healthy people and environments through education, collaboration, and social change.

This year's event featured a screening of our documentary "Las Promotoras," which captures the work of our very own community of promotoras as they led Colorado's first community-led independent air monitoring project and health impact study, an overview of our environmental justice accomplishments in 2025; and words from cherished community leaders, promotoras, and youth leaders.

Going into its sixth year, EcoFiesta reflects a deep and growing community commitment to environmental justice, not just for today, but for our children, grandchildren, and future generations. Stay tuned for EcoFiesta 2026!

OUR TEAM



Cultivando is made up of leaders who reflect our Latino and Indigenous community.

We are guided by our heart of service. We honor the sacrifices, as well as the perseverance and resilience, of our mothers, our fathers, and our ancestors.

We dedicate our past and future achievements to our daughters, our sons, and our future generations.

WE ARE ALL A PIECE OF THE PUZZLE

Olga González
Chief Executive Officer

Rocio Franco
Director of Staffing
and Programming

Denise Romero
Director of Finance
and Development

Guadalupe Solis
Director of Public Health
and Advocacy

Laura Botello
Community Engagement
Coordinator

Reyna Soria
Universal Promotora

Maria Zubiate
Promotora

Guadalupe Villalobos
Promotora

Elvia Chavez
Promotora

Cristina Ruiz
Promotora

Manuel Marquez
Climate Equity Policy Fellow



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Board President

Cec Ortiz
Treasurer

Taber Ward
Vice President

Charleen Ramirez Mares
Member

THANK YOU TO OUR 2025 SPONSORS

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Healthy Air & Water Colorado

Words to Power

Buell Foundation

Environmental Defense Fund

Chinook Fund

Bonfilis Stanton Foundation

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The Archer Group

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Colorado Fiscal Institute

The Colorado Trust

The Denver Foundation

Off the Road

ReSchool

The Margulf Foundation

Center for Biological Diversity

Colorado Access Foundation

The Mighty Arrow Foundation

The City of Commerce City

Tides Foundation

**The Community
Resource Center**

Conservation Colorado

Sierra Club Colorado

RTD

**Climate & Clean Energy
Equity Fund**

**Wildlands Restoration
Volunteers**

**Metro Denver Partnership for
Health & the Colorado
Health Institute**

**The Colorado Health
Foundation**

**Colorado Department of
Public Health & Environment**

WE ARE ALSO GRATEFUL FOR OUR MANY SUPPORTERS AND COLLABORATORS IN 2025:

- Green Latinos
- Earthworks
- GreenHouse Connection Center
- Clinica Tepeyac
- Denver Department of Public Health and Environment, Love My Air Program
- Adams County Health Department Environmental Health Division
- The Dickinson Lab at Colorado School of Public Health
- Colorado State University Department of Sociology
- Earth Justice
- Moms Clean Air Force/EcoMadres
- University of Denver Environmental Law Clinic
- Patagonia
- Full Circle Future
- Kaiser Permanente Colorado Environmental Stewardship
- University of Denver Graduate School of Social Work
- Our Lady Mother of the Church
- Spirit of the Sun

ON THE HORIZON

Cultivando is excited for the changes to come in 2026. The challenges we face only make us more resilient and innovative. We look forward to providing our soon-to-be copyrighted Promotora curriculum to more of our communities throughout Colorado and beyond. Our environmental justice work will center on a novel health symptoms survey that will provide additional data linking our community's health to the constant pollution they endure. We are still in search of our permanent home, which we hope to purchase as part of a capital campaign that includes major donors and community members like you!

We hope to expand and update our current FFN programming and our mental health and wellness programming. Our community is full of leaders waiting to be uplifted, and we invite everyone to share their own gifts, talents, resources, and passions in our important work. Our hope is that these times continue to unite us and to bring out the best in all of us.

¡La gente unida jamás será vencida!
The people united will never be defeated!

THANK YOU



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