

2023 ANNUAL REPORT



A YEAR OF
PURPOSE & ACTION

20
23



Building a Foundation, Embracing a Legacy

Welcome to our Annual Report, a showcase of our achievements, progress, and commitment to excellence throughout the year.



Leading with Vision, Inspiring Success

Beloved Community - Amades Querides,

As we approach the end of another transformative year, we are excited to share with you the remarkable achievements and milestones that Fortaleza Familiar has accomplished through this report.

As you may know, Fortaleza Familiar was founded in 2020 to support Lesbian Gay Bisexual Transgender Queer and Two Spirit young people in Colorado. We are dedicated to the wellness and safety of Latinx, Chicanx and Indigenous LGBTQ2S+ youth and their families.

Your support this past year has helped build powerful spaces that honor LGBTQ2S+ youth of color.

In these past three years, Fortaleza Familiar has grown beyond our wildest expectations and I trust we will continue to nurture this seed collectively. This report will share the details of some of our major collective wins for the year including:

- **Growing our Fortaleza Familiar staff team,**
- Delivering workshops and programs for youth, families and youth-serving professionals,
- **Increasing our donor and funders circles,**
- Launching Fortaleza En Naturaleza, our outdoor accessibility program for LGBTQ2S+ youth of color, families and community.

We have accomplished so much this past year thanks to the unwavering support from our donors, funders, volunteers, staff and community members like you. Our young people and their families have truly fueled our work by sharing their invaluable time, vision and energy.

Despite continuous attacks on LGBTQ2S+ youth, communities, and affirming healthcare across the nation our community continues to show the fortitude in coming together.

As we head into the new year we are committed to move with a renewed sense of intentionality.

Our focus for 2024 is to:
Fortify Our Foundation & Strengthen Our Team.

In 2024, we invite you to be part of our family and tend to our roots. Help us build a powerful space for our young people and families.

A family that celebrates existence, demands justice, and creates safety.

¡Adelante con Fortaleza!

Mimi Madrid

Executive Director, Co-Founder



Uniting Talents, Fulfilling Our Mission



mimi madrid
she/they/him



Meet our dedicated team of facilitators, coordinators and directors who have contributed their expertise, passion, and collaboration to drive our success.



val ponce nájera
they/them



nez gonzalez
he/him



pam reséndiz trujano
they/them

Read our team's bios: www.fortalezafamiliar.org/whoweare

Fortaleza Familiar and Our Strategic Approach

At Fortaleza Familiar, we believe in the power of young LGBTQ2S Indigenous Chicanx and Latinx people. We believe our collective resilience will lead to community safety and wellness. Our programs are centered around cultural and political education, LGBTQ wellness, youth development and parent/family workshops.

We build environments and communities that honor the dignity of young people. At Fortaleza Familiar, there's a space for everyone in our family. We include family members as both a cultural value and strategy to build safety while ending hate, homophobia and transphobia.

When we include our collective families they also transform and grow. We all win.
Fortaleza means we face life with courage. Familiar means we do it together.





Our Community Of Purpose & Action



*Delve into our
programmatic
accomplishments,
deliverables and
community impacts.*

Program Highlights

This year has been filled with community building, education and relationship building. We continued our key program Liberate Ourselves and successfully launched our outdoor accessibility program Fortaleza En Naturaleza. This is in addition to the community events we hosted throughout the year and the delivery of trainings and workshops across the state. We continued to serve the need for individual one on one support for families, youth and other LGBTQ2S+ community members. The following are highlights, impact and reach of our program work:

- **Liberate Ourselves**
- Fortaleza En Naturaleza
- **Workshops & Trainings**
- Community Events
- **Community Outreach**
- Individual Support & Cafecitos



LIBERATE OURSELVES

QUEER YOUTH LEADERSHIP PROGRAM

12 BIPOC LGBTQ2S+ youth graduates

6 BIPOC LGBTQ2S+ facilitators

8 Educational Sessions

- LGBTQ2S+ 101 Mental Health & Safety
- Consent & Healthy Relationships
- Queer & Trans Ancestors & History
- Queer & Trans Inclusive Sexual Health Education
- Arts, Cultural Programming and More



I know the bonds I've made, this community, this culture, and everything I learned will follow me. I am beyond stoked to continue my journey and stay connected.

LIBERATE OURSELVES

IMPACT REPORT & QUOTES

Liberate Our Selves is the youth organizing component of Fortaleza Familiar that supports the wellness, health, and resilience of LGBTQ young people of color.



85%

- graduates of Liberate Ourselves self reported that participating has **helped them believe in their own leadership.**

I felt so much love from the facilitators. I would love to be just like them and help queer youths.

100%

- of participants agreed or strongly agreed that being part of Liberate Ourselves has **helped them increase their overall self-acceptance and cultural background.**
- of participants agreed and strongly agreed that since participating in Liberate Ourselves their **mental health and well-being has improved.**
- of participants reported participating in Liberate Ourselves helped them recognize that **they deserve a safe environment at school that is free from discrimination, violence or hate.**

“

So much culture!
So much exciting energy! I learned so much.
Our History was my absolute favorite because I had never felt a stronger sense of belonging in my life.
As though everyone was my sibling, my family.

I think that the most helpful information I learned was **how to take care of myself & how to maintain healthy and safe relationships with partners.**

FORTALEZA EN NATURALEZA

BIPOC LGBTQ2S+ YOUTH OUTDOOR ACCESSIBILITY PROGRAM

- 1st** Pilot Year - Colorado Equity Outdoor Grantees
- 1** BIPOC LGBTQ2S+ leadership planning retreat
- 3** Outdoor Summer Events
- Rocky Mountain Arsenal, Commerce City
 - Brown's Canyon, Buena Vista
 - Soda Lake, Bear Creek State Park

95+

BIPOC LGBTQ2S+ attendees

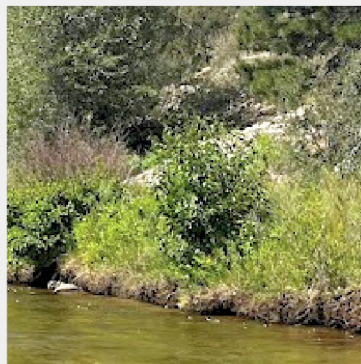
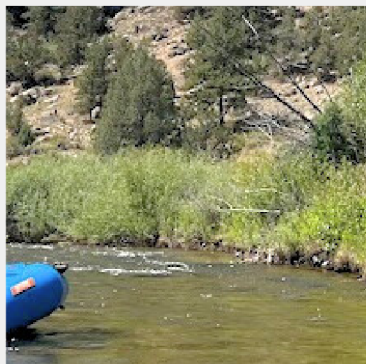


FORTALEZA EN NATURALEZA



PARTICIPANT QUOTES

- **Everyone made it a safe space**, it felt nice to be among a community dedicated to uplifting and advocating for queer BIPOC youth/folks.
- When you see others being their authentic selves it's so inspiring. I appreciate being around **familiar foods, language and culture**.
- Fortaleza en Naturaleza is one of the most unique prosocial groups for youth. Fortaleza en Naturaleza affords youth and families who have limited accessibility to outdoor programs but **also interweave cultural and historical aspects of being good stewards to the land**.
- These events are important because it provides an **intergenerational community and support system**. Despite being terrified to get on the raft, **I felt safe and I knew that it was okay to express my fears and felt supported and reassured throughout the trip**. This sort of activity also allows me to reconnect with nature in an engaging manner, allowing me to feel uplifted both emotionally and physically.



↑ 95%

participants self-report an increase in belonging to the outdoors thanks to their participation at Fortaleza En Naturaleza.

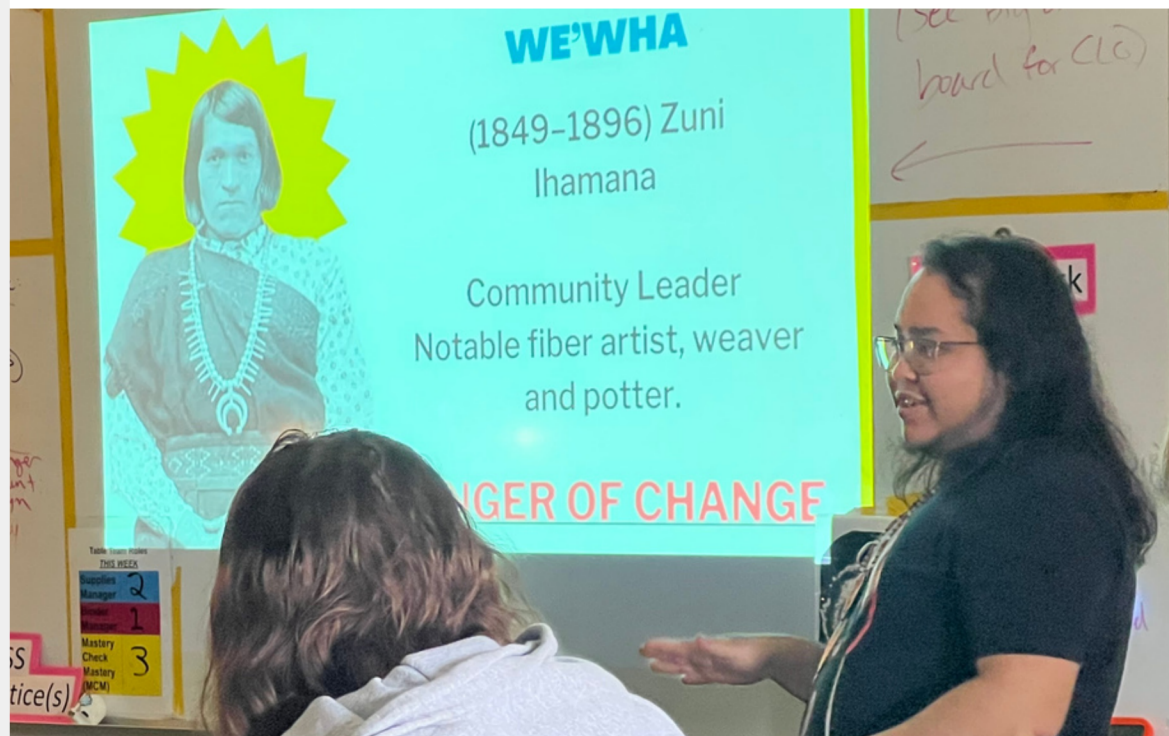
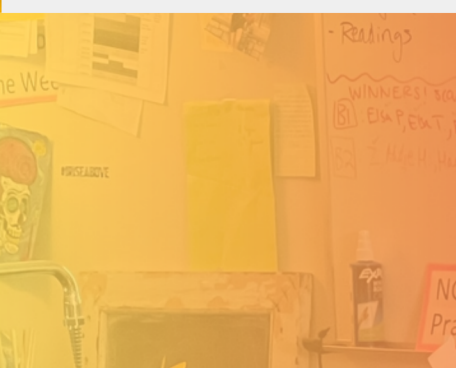
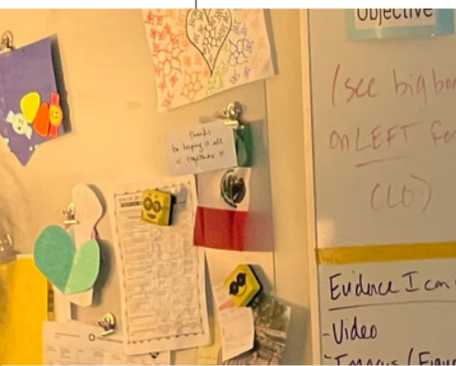
COMMUNITY WORKSHOPS

- **Women of our Past and Present: Forging Forward with Fortaleza**
- Queer Resistance and Existence Through Art
- **Non Binary Thinking: Expanding a Flexible Mindset**
- Criar y Apoyar a Jovenes LGBT
- **Supporting Parents of LGBTIQ2S Youth**
- Dia de Muertos History and Cultural Knowledge
- **Meet our Trans Ancestors**
- Inclusive Sex Ed Workshop for Youth
- **Lenguaje Incluyente en Español**
- Many More!

30+ Workshops

140 Youth Served

185+ Total Participants



COMMUNITY EVENTS

- **Pride Then and Now** in partnership with Joy as Resistance
- **Fortaleza Familiar's Birthgay Celebration**
- Rainbows and Revolutions Exhibit
- Dia De Muertos: Honor Our Ancestors
- **Fotos y Recuerdos: Queer Holigay Family Photo Sessions**
- Many More!

150+
ATTENDEES



COMMUNITY OUTREACH

- **Denver Kids Annual Breakfast**
- Brown Elementary School Mentorship
- **DU Neurodivergent Student Association**
- Sheridan Summer Kick Off Event
- **Girls Scouts Family Day**
- A Prismatic Masquerade
- **Aurora Pride Event**
- CinemaQ (Sie Film Center)
- **La Raza Youth Leadership Summit**
- DPS LGBTQ Student Banquet
- **Queer Youth Summit (One Colorado)**
- Many More!

7 Schools

10 Community
Events

250 Total
Attendees



INDIVIDUAL SUPPORTS

13 Young People

17 Parents / Caretakers

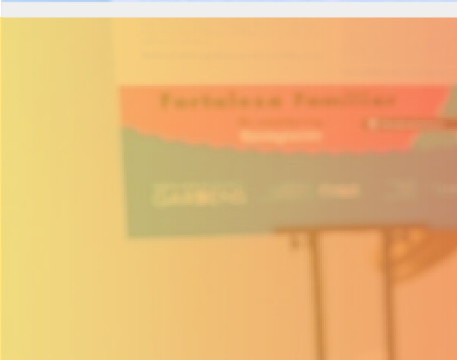
5 Community Members

- Resource Sharing
- Mutual Aid / Rent Assistance
- Wage Supplementation
- Transportation Support
- Parent / Caretaker Support
- Youth Support
- Community Member Support

21 Individual One-on-Ones



Year In Review





Embracing our Families, Families with Fortitude



“I am inspired by the positive impact [Fortaleza Familiar] has on the lives of queer youth today, and their parents. Your support, encouragement, and acceptance have been instrumental in helping us embrace our true selves and navigate the challenges we face. Thank you, Fortaleza for being a beacon of hope and acceptance for the queer community.”

The Granado Family



“Fortaleza Familiar is an integral part of our intergenerational queer family. Fortaleza allows us to show up as we are. They invite us to engage in loving/hard conversations within our family. Helping us all find and discover our role in queer liberation and resistance through love. Helping us create a safer and more affirming world to raise our children. A world we all deserved growing up”

La Familia Vargas Macias



Solid Growth, Sustainable Prosperity



Delve into our donor circles growth, a list of our supporters and donors and learn more about our annual theme for 2024.



Annual Breakdown

Donations in Number, Year-Over-Year





Sincerest Gratitude To Our Sustainers, Donors & Foundational Support

Donors

We are privileged to have donors like you who share our vision and mission for a better future for all BIPOC LGBTQ2S+ youth and their families.

Johanna Bates	Mary Kerr
Vic Gomez Betancourt	Emily Knaphus-Soran
Heather Brokmeier	Beau Laurence
Eleanor Cheetham	Mathew Lebauer
Merissa Cope	Jillian Linares
Tatiana Crawford	Kai Lumen
Molly Delandsheer	Julie Macias
Alan & Linda Dewey	Mimi Madrid
Clayton Dewey	Anna Martinez
Douglas Duren	Maritza Martínez
Evangelina Fernandez	Emma Milek
Erin Fogel	Danah Miles
Andrew Gordon	Clare Parkinson
Brent Gordon	Erin Pierce
Samuel A Granado	Rosie Powers
Suzi Grishpul	Ebone Ransom
Jimmy Gulick	Mark Schiff
Robert Hardy	Jamlux Serntjlione
Jay Herrero	Daniel Strong
Kathryn Hilton	Kelly Wells
Jeffrey Hipp	Anonymous
Linda Hsieh-Dewey	Anonymous
Shahlla Karmali	Anonymous
	Anonymous
	Anonymous

Sustainers

This circle of folks are the gust of wind under our hummingbird wings -- the life force of our organization. Mil gracias.

CJ Callender
Katherine Crowe
Liz and Ron Dansie
Vernon Dewey
Virgilio Herrero
Dana Kennedy
Crystal Middlestadt
Norma Puga
Cele Razavi-Shearer
Gabbie Zubia

Business Supporters

Fort Greene
Maíz LLC
Spherex

Special Thanks:

Kelly Perez
40 Donations for Clayton's 40th Birthday
AbsenceSoft: Pride Month Walk-A-Thon
Ben & Jerry's Fundraiser
And our ongoing foundational funders.



2024 Annual Theme

Fortify Our Foundation and Strengthen Our Team

In our fourth year, we will tend the roots of our community work. We will focus on the quality of our internal and external engagements.

We will continue to strengthen our core programs including Liberate Ourselves, Fortaleza En Naturaleza and the delivery of our Community Workshops and Trainings.

We embody fortified community.



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