



The Center for People of All Races

A voice and a hub for the Latino community
as we advocate on behalf of our people
and work to achieve social justice.

EL CENTRO DE LA RAZA REAFFIRMING OUR STATUS AS A SENSITIVE LOCATION FOR ALL IMMIGRANTS

Programs & Services

With over 25,050 volunteer hours, El Centro de la Raza serves 18,633 individuals and 9,387 families annually through the following programs and services:

Basic Healthcare Enrollment
Bebes! Infant Mortality Prevention
Café con El Centro
César Chávez Demonstration Garden
College Readiness
Comadres
Community Meeting Space
Community Service
Crisis Advocacy
Cultural / Political / Social Events
Economic Development
ECR Transitional Housing
El Patio Apartments
Employment
ESL Classes / Spanish Classes
Financial Empowerment
Food Bank
Foreclosure Counseling
Growing & Learning Together
Homeless Assistance
Healthy Cooking Classes /
Nuestras Comidas
Hope for Youth Poetry & Civil Rights
History Classes
HUD Housing Counseling
Immigrant / Human / Civil Rights Social
Justice Advocacy
José Martí Child Development Center
Latino Hot Meal Program
Legal Clinic Site
Local, State, National & International
Coalition Building
Luis Alfonso Velásquez Flores
After School Program
Parent-Child Home Program
Plaza Roberto Maestas
Santos Rodríguez Memorial Park
Senior Nutrition & Wellness
Senior Home Delivered Meals
Smoking Cessation
Tax Prep Site
Transit Oriented Parking
Veteran's Services
Volunteerism
Youth Case Management & Cultural
Enrichment
Youth Employment
Youth Technology Training
Youth Violence Prevention

**For Immediate Release
February 22, 2017**

**Press Contacts:
Estela Ortega (206) 910-8099
Valeria Saucedo (206) 957-4605**

El Centro de la Raza was founded in 1972 in the old Beacon Hill School as an organization dedicated to building the Beloved Community in Seattle. Forty-five years later, El Centro de la Raza has become an indispensable community and convening center for all people, but particularly those in the Latino community.

We provide human and emergency services including a food bank, infant mortality prevention for pregnant women, and homeless assistance. Our asset building programs include financial education, foreclosure counseling, job training, and bilingual/ESL classes. Our housing and economic development includes the Plaza Roberto Maestas, which features 112 affordable housing units, in addition to several other housing locations in Seattle that offer another 18 units of affordable and low-income units. In 2016, over 10,000 households took advantage of El Centro de la Raza's services, and over 346 people were living on our properties.

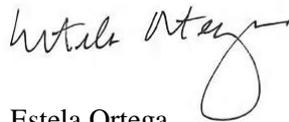
But true to our roots, El Centro de la Raza has remained, first and foremost, a school. Our world renowned José Martí Child Development Center provides bilingual and multicultural preschool curriculum to children aged 1-5. Our after school program tutors elementary students aged 5-12. Middle schoolers take advantage of our summer school program. Our Roberto Maestas Youth Leadership Institute helps address the opportunity gap in K-12 education by empowering a cohort of 30-40 Latino youth in King County to grow as leaders. And our college readiness program helps middle- and high-school students in Seattle create a post-secondary education plan with one-on-one support. Those are just a few of the many programs we offer to help educate babies, toddlers, youth, and young adults.

But the vulnerable communities El Centro de la Raza serves are in grave danger as the federal government has threatened to implement draconian immigration policies that could tear families apart. The young children in our preschool are worried and nervous that their parents might not come home. Undocumented students who have grown up in this country are afraid of being sent back to a place they have never known.

While our Beloved Community has been shaken with fear and trepidation, our resolve has not wavered. For nearly half a century, El Centro de la Raza has been a pillar in the Seattle community, a place for all people to convene, learn, and get the help they need without fear of being taken away from their families.

We therefore reaffirm that for purposes of immigration enforcement policy, El Centro de la Raza is a sensitive location, like any other school. As with other sensitive locations, such as hospitals and churches, we expect federal authorities not to conduct immigration raids on any of our properties, including our housing developments (which themselves offer after-school programs and other educational services). El Centro de la Raza has a moral responsibility to the community we serve. We will vigorously defend the rights of our people, and nonviolently resist any attempt to target El Centro de la Raza with immigration enforcement raids. From this point forward, we will have attorney's onsite or on call 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, to ensure that our community is protected.

El Centro de la Raza will always remain a place where families can receive information and resources in a safe and welcoming place. We call on local, state, and federal leaders to recognize El Centro de la Raza's unique and special role in the Seattle community as a school and gathering place for all people. Since 1972 we have worked together to build a Beloved Community in Seattle. We will do everything we can to defend our Beloved Community from those who would threaten our values of love, nonviolence, and inclusion.



Estela Ortega
Executive Director
El Centro de la Raza
2524 16th Avenue South
Seattle, WA 98144
206-957-4613---Direct Line
206-957-4605---Executive Assistant
execasst@elcentrodelaraza.org

Estela Ortega is available for interviews by calling (206) 910-8099. For more information, please call (206) 957-4605 or email execasst@elcentrodelaraza.org.

Cc: Nathalie Asher, Seattle Field Office Director ICE
Governor Jay Inslee
King County Executive Dow Constantine
Seattle Mayor Edward Murray
Councilmember Lorena Gonzalez
Councilmember Bruce Harrell
Chief Kathleen O' Toole
City Attorney Pete Holmes
King County Sheriff John Urquhart
Attorney General Bob Ferguson
US Representative Pramila Jayapal
US Representative Adam Smith
US Senator Patty Murray
US Senator Maria Cantwell
Washington State House Representative Sharon Tomiko Santos
Washington State House Representative Eric Pettigrew
Washington State Senator Rebecca Saldaña
David Perez, Esq. Perkins Coie LLP
Brenda Williams, Esq.