



# Valley Settlement

## Annual Report 2017



Empowering immigrant families in the Roaring Fork Valley to improve their lives.



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# Me Llamo Yasmín

My mother left me to live with my grandparents in Juarez, Mexico, when I was five years old. She wanted to give me a better life, so she came to work in the Roaring Fork Valley. At the time I didn't understand, but now, at 33 as a wife and mother with four children, I understand so well. I have always wanted to make a better future for my children, too, just like my mom did for me.

When you have children and you work, it's very difficult, in all aspects. But it's not impossible. My job in housekeeping at Aspen Valley Hospital at nights is a blessing. If I learn better English, there are opportunities for me to advance and not just stay a housekeeper. It's good work, I don't mean to say it isn't, but it's better to grow. And my children tell me, "Mom, you can do it! You can!"

At Valley Settlement I am taking English classes and going to Learning With Love class twice a week with my youngest child, Vanessa. The teacher visits us in our home. At Learning With Love, I can spend time just with Vanessa, playing learning, and teaching her more than anything—I like it a lot. It's good for me, and for her.

My self-esteem was pretty low when I met Judith, a Promotora at Valley Settlement. She helped me set a goal to care for myself—that's why I'm exercising. I feel like it is my time, for me. It is a bit of a sacrifice, because some days I get home from work at midnight and wake up at 5 a.m. I'm doing this for myself and for my children. It's helpful for their development, to see me take care of myself as a woman and a person. It's been an achievement, because now my older children like exercising. I tell them, "If I can do it, so can you!"

Because I was so young when I joined my mother in the Roaring Fork Valley, I have DACA protections. This is a blessing. When I heard that DACA was going to be suspended, it scared me a lot. But I had confidence that everything was going to be okay. I choose to see it in this way because if I am doing poorly, my children will do poorly. As a mother, I can't have that.

My oldest son leaves for college soon to become a nurse. This is exciting, but my heart is breaking, too. I want him to achieve what I could not. I only finished 8th grade, but my kids will go to college. I am so proud of them. I am so grateful to Valley Settlement's donors for helping my family move forward.



## Peer Support for New Moms

Access to culturally acceptable mental health services is a national and local challenge. Valley Settlement staff have heard this need articulated by many participants over the past six years. Among mental health problems, depression is the most common, and women are particularly affected. Up to 70% of pregnant and postpartum women experiencing depression never receive help. Valley Settlement is pioneering an initiative to address maternal depression in Latinas with young children through a project called Alma, meaning "soul" in Spanish.

Over the past two years, Valley Settlement has partnered with Dr. Sona Dimidjian at CU Boulder and CU's National Mental Health Innovation Center to co-create Alma. This Spanish-language project is based upon the theory of Behavioral Activation, and has been shown to be effective in other countries. The program will support 60 mothers in 2018. Valley Settlement is working closely with the Valley's mental health providers to share the progress and outcomes of this innovative approach, and to assure smooth referrals in all directions.





# You Gave Hope in a Difficult Year

**2017 was a challenging year for immigrant families.** With the national conversation around immigration making headlines and national immigration policy in a state of flux, families that have members with mixed documentation status are living under the constant threat of being torn apart.

Valley Settlement staff and participants include many Dreamers, whose future is uncertain. Despite this, they persevere.

Valley Settlement understands the many challenges immigrant families face, which can negatively impact children's educational outcomes. Programs such as Learning With Love and El Busesito Preschool have yielded significant improvements in children's school readiness skills and parental outcomes of knowledge and confidence.

**Thanks to you,** immigrant families in the Roaring Fork Valley feel accepted and supported through Valley Settlement.

# 93%

of parents in Learning With Love classes felt safer in the community because of their relationship with Valley Settlement staff.

# 92%

of Lifelong Learning students report an increase in their self-esteem.

# 93%

of teachers with a Parent Mentor in the classroom report that students have improved their attitude toward learning.

# 97%

of children in Learning With Love made gains in social-emotional, communication, and problem-solving skills.

# 96%

of children in El Busesito Preschool are meeting or exceeding TS GOLD developmental expectations by year-end.

## 2017 By the Numbers

# 4

**Alma** peer mentors trained in Behavioral Activation strategies to provide peer-to-peer support for moms suffering from untreated depression.

# 22

**Family, Friends and Neighbors** who provide informal childcare for 58 children received in-home coaching in safety, childhood development and nutrition.

# 96

Children 3–5 years old in 12 neighborhoods participated in **El Busesito Preschool** for 5 hours each week, with an 86% attendance rate.

# 100

Adult learners received over 2,000 hours of Spanish-language classes in Computer, English and Math through **Lifelong Learning**.

# 145

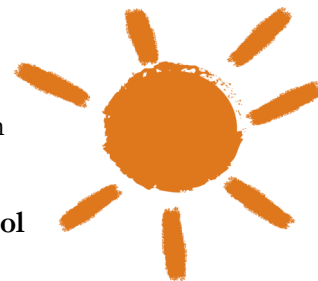
Home visits conducted by **Family Support** staff to ensure families have access to medical care, mental health services, adequate and nutritious food, and safe housing.

# 6,048

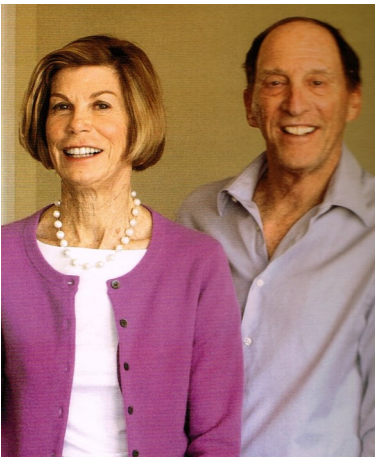
Contact hours provided to 48 families with children 0–3 years old by **Learning With Love** early childhood professionals in class and through home visits.

# 21,760

Volunteer hours provided to approximately 1,140 students in 57 elementary classrooms in the Roaring Fork School District by 60 **Parent Mentors**.



# Larry and Susan Marx Make a Difference



“There are enormous amounts of well-meaning organizations out there with a purpose you’re aligned with and that are managing their organizations well,” says Larry Marx, an ardent supporter of the Arts, animals, and social justice. So what stands out about Valley Settlement? “The whole approach of Valley Settlement is the way it should be—from the bottom up. You need feet on the ground, a common-sense approach to problems. You have to sit and listen. To me, one of the biggest issues facing this country is assuring people an equal opportunity. I can’t affect that on a national level, so to me it’s just one community, or one valley, at a time. Valley Settlement is a cost-effective, efficient way of leveling the playing field where it really needs to be leveled, which is at the beginning, with young people. Parent involvement is such a vital part of the equation. If there isn’t that support at home, it’s a really tough road.” Valley Settlement is grateful to have the generous support of Larry and Susan Marx.

## Honoring Rob Pew



Valley Settlement’s bottom-up approach resonates with Rob Pew, the outgoing Board Secretary and Treasurer. It’s one of the things he values most.

“So many philanthropic efforts are from the top-down. Valley Settlement formed as the result of interviewing and interacting with the people who needed help...in a sense, they designed their own programs,” explains Rob. “I appreciate that we have a good board that is really dedicated to this effort.”

Rob led the board of the Manaus Fund and helped Valley Settlement transition as it launched as an independent 501(c)3 in September of 2016. As he leaves the Valley Settlement Board of Directors, he invites us all to “keep listening to the people, and acting as a voice for the immigrant community.”

## Welcoming Carlos Ulloa Jaquez



Carlos started as a volunteer with Valley Settlement, and soon realized he wanted to be more involved. “I thought, here’s an organization that’s doing something that nobody else is doing. As an immigrant myself, I am touched by stories I hear.

I identify with a lot of the people I meet. My biggest encouragement is to see these people who are really wanting to better their lives.”

Carlos moved to the Valley right after finishing high school, and worked to put himself through college. Now, he is a Graphic Designer at Alpine Bank and is the newest Valley Settlement Board Member. Carlos describes himself as a ‘hands-on guy,’ volunteering in the **Lifelong Learning** program, teaching English, Math, Computers, and Spanish.

“I like being able to bring more people to the organization through volunteering or donating. It’s a big part of a Board Member’s responsibility, to bring people in.”

## Board of Directors

Ellen Freedman, *President*. Elaine Gantz Berman, *Vice President*. Dr. Doug Jones, *Secretary & Treasurer*.

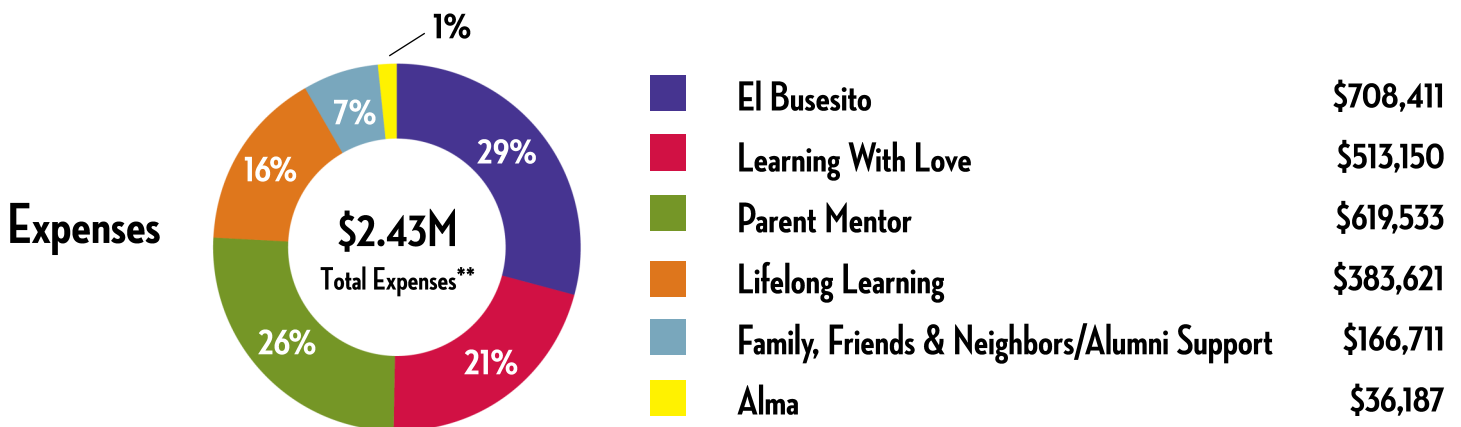
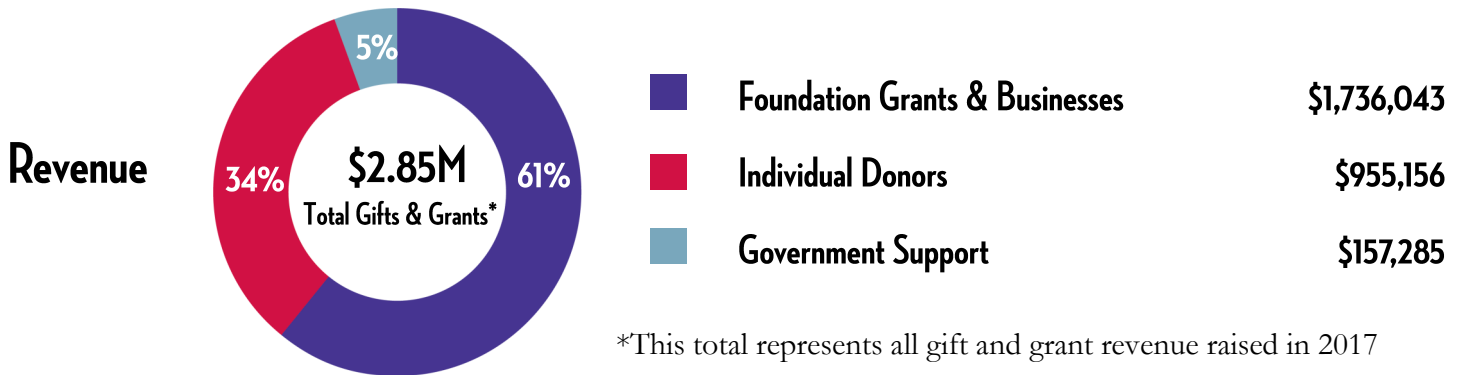
Richard Gonzales | Jamie Montgomery Helzberg | Carlos Ulloa Jaquez | Paula Losada Nickell | Robert Stein | Patti Stranahan

Many thanks to Founder, George Stranahan, Finance Committee Advisors, Bob Glah and Don Rosenberg, and outgoing Board Secretary & Treasurer, Rob Pew.

**Executive Director:** Jon Fox-Rubin

# 2017 Financial Report

Valley Settlement is committed to building the capacity, partnerships, and programs appropriate to address the priority needs of the immigrant community in the Roaring Fork Valley. Low staff turnover and high job satisfaction reflect the staff's commitment to Valley Settlement's core mission across all programs. With your support, Valley Settlement prioritizes the investment of resources in staff, creating continuity and trust within the community.



\*\*Valley Settlement's Core Mission Support Services represented 31% of each program's expenses in 2017. Development was 8% of total expenses, or \$201,381. General and Administration was 23% of total expenses, or \$550,174. The remaining 69% of expenses were spent on Programming, totaling \$1,676,058.

## Thanks to our Dedicated Community Partners

Basalt Elementary School, Basalt Middle School, Basalt Regional Library, Catholic Charities, Carbondale Branch Library, Carbondale Fire Department, Carbondale Recreation Center, Colorado Mountain College, Crystal River Elementary School, Defiance Church, Eagle County Community Center, English In Action, First United Methodist Church, The Glenwood Church of Christ, Glenwood Springs Elementary School, Glenwood Springs Library District, Glenwood Middle School, Good Shepherd Lutheran Church, MindSprings Health, Mountain Family Health Centers, The Orchard, Riverview School, Roaring Fork Family Resource Center, Roaring Fork School District, St. Peter's of the Valley Church, St. Stephen Catholic Church, St. Vincent Catholic Church, Town of Basalt, Villas de Santa Lucia

# Gratitude to our Generous Supporters

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## Government Support

Eagle County  
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Town of Carbondale  
University of Colorado—Boulder

\*An Advised Fund of the  
Aspen Community Foundation