

**CULTURAL COALITION**

# **2025 ANNUAL REPORT**



Cultural Coalition, Inc's Mission is to connect communities and generations to ancestral knowledge and practices through artistic cultural preservation and programs that celebrate Chicano, Latiné, and Indigenous heritages.

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# ABOUT CULTURAL COALITION, INC.



Since 1996, Cultural Coalition, Inc, a non-profit arts service organization has been dedicated to providing accessible arts engagement through unique cultural programs. Our Vision is to celebrate diverse cultures, serve families, provide cultural education, and create new traditions.

Our programmatic activities aim to educate, promote and develop cultural arts programs and engage artists in the Phoenix area while preserving, producing, and presenting socially significant community traditions.

Through cultural art events, multidisciplinary performances, educational outreach, and our Mask Alive Art Archive Collection, we tell our collective universal stories, preserve our heritage, and keep our traditional icons alive and relevant to our contemporary culture.

Supporting our local professional and youth artists is an imperative goal of our organization. Artists are the visionaries and communicators of contemporary issues; it is vital to continue utilizing the arts as a way to reach new audiences while preventing commercial exploitation and cultural appropriations.



# A MESSAGE FROM OUR FOUNDERS



Hello Cultural Coalition Friends & Supporters,

Upon coming through 2025, Zarco and I are filled with a profound sense of gratitude and pride. It would be an understatement to say this year wasn't easy. Like many in the arts sector, we faced significant funding challenges. These shifts left our organization facing real budget difficulties that tested our ability to be malleable.

However, we have always believed that art is born from resilience. Instead of scaling back, our incredible staff and visionary artists turned these obstacles into opportunities, finding new and meaningful ways to show how La Cultura Cura.

Highlighting this idea was the opening of the Mask Alive Art Collection Gallery and community space through a wonderful new partnership with Arizona Center.

In just ten months, we saw the incredible impact of having a dedicated space for our community. Welcoming over 3,000 visitors, we were able to offer artist workshops, free family activities, and opportunities for our apprentices and collaborating artists to share their works of art and talents.

We made it through 2025 because we saw how our community needed a space where art is accessible and culture is celebrated. The gallery wasn't just a room full of masks; it became a hub for connection, education, and inspiration.

We are so proud of what we've built together. We are excited to carry this momentum forward, continuing to prove that even when funding is cut, our cultural connection through the arts only grows stronger.

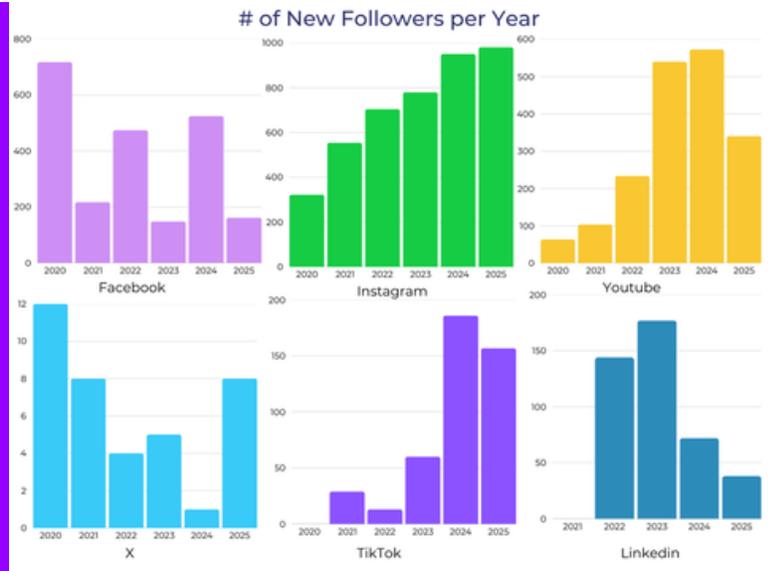
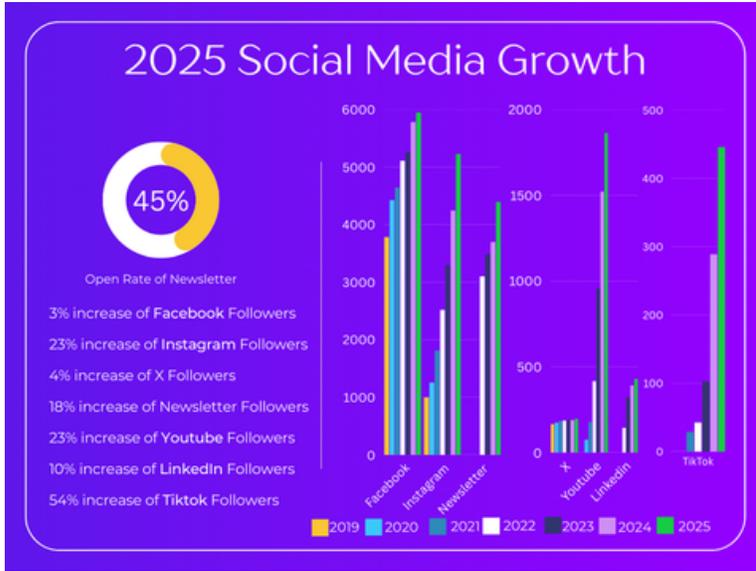
With heartfelt thanks,

*Carmen & Zarco Guerrero*

# 2025 GROWTH & CONNECTION

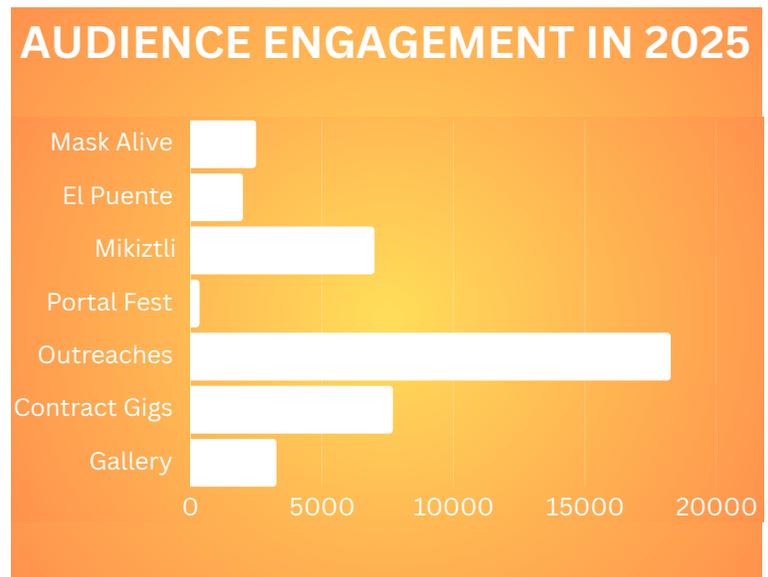
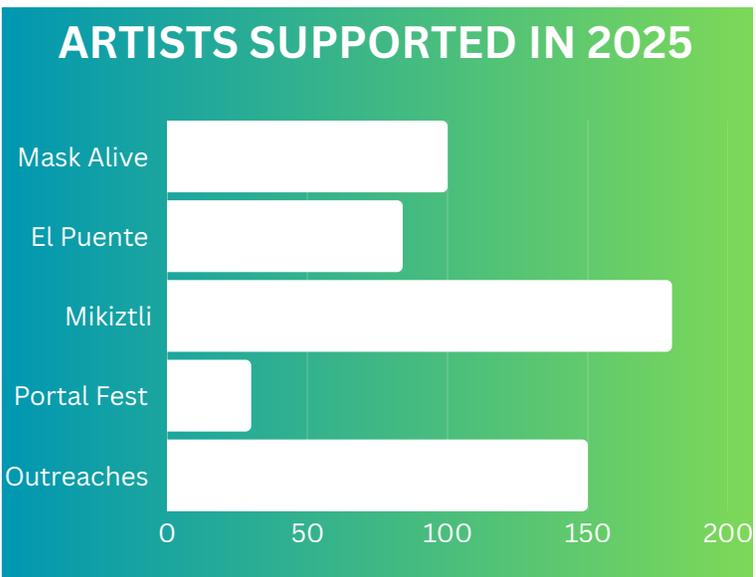
## CONNECTING COMMUNITIES TO THE ARTS

- Connected over 36,000 community members with cultural arts outreaches and festivals
- Provided over 30 artist outreaches & educational activities in ten different cities
- Partnered with Tempe Center for the Arts to bring indigenous artists and programming to their audiences with our 3<sup>rd</sup> Annual Indígena: A Latin American Indigenous Celebration and the OXDX Native Holiday Market



## CONNECTING GENERATIONS TO THE ARTS

- Supported over 450 different youth and professional artists with our festivals and programs
- Contracted one college student worker to help with volunteers, gallery, and outreach programs
- Began new partnership with ASU Piper Servant Leader program supporting 5 student volunteers
- Received 453 hours donated by 71 different volunteers



# 2025 SUPPORT GROWTH

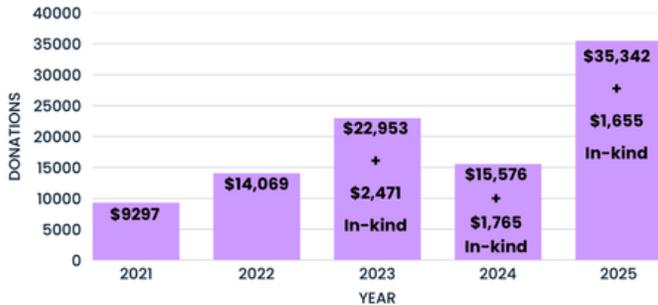


## INDIVIDUAL GIVING GROWTH

2021 THROUGH 2025

127% GIFT INCREASE FROM 2024

49 NEW 1ST TIME DONORS



## NEW GIVING THIS YEAR

By having a dedicated in-person gallery space at the Arizona Center for our Mask Alive Art Collection, we were able to grow our individual giving and supporters in a variety of ways:

- Hosted our Volver Earth Day Fundraiser, welcoming 80 guests to the space
- Provided tours to more than two dozen collectors, donors, and arts organizations at the gallery
- Raised over \$500 in donations from gallery visitors and sold over \$1300 in merchandise

## NEW SPONSORS IN 2025

Our partnership with Arizona Center in 2025 opened up many new opportunities for Cultural Coalition, including connecting with new sponsors:

- Arizona Center donated in-kind space for our Mask Alive Art Collection Gallery for the entire year
- MIKIZTLI: Día de los Muertos Festival moved to Arizona Center and attracted 12 new 1<sup>st</sup> time sponsors

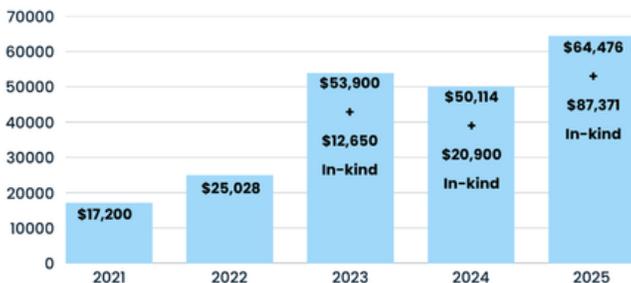


## SPONSORSHIP GROWTH

2021 THROUGH 2025

12 NEW CASH SPONSORSHIPS TOTALING \$31,438

1 NEW IN-KIND SPONSOR DONATED \$84,971 WORTH OF GOODS & SERVICES



## NEW SUPPORT IN 2025

With federal grant funds frozen, reduced, or eliminated in 2025, Cultural Coalition sought out new funders to keep our programs available to the communities we serve:

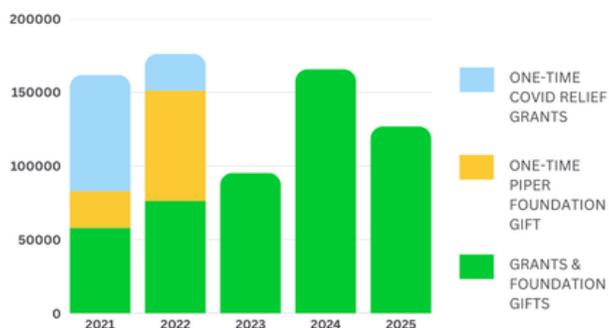
- Received four new 1<sup>st</sup> time grants in support of our free After School Arts program
- Awarded a 1<sup>st</sup> time grant from Applied Materials in support of our free gallery exhibits and family nights
- One new grant awarded in support of Mask Alive Festival



## GRANTS & FOUNDATIONS GIVING

2021 THROUGH 2025

FIVE NEW 1ST TIME GRANT AWARDS IN 2025 TOTALING \$34,000





## After School Arts Program @ El Rancho del Arte and del Sol Apartment Complex

Since 2016, Cultural Coalition has operated a free After School Arts Program at the low-income housing complex El Rancho del Arte and del Sol in Mesa, AZ. We serve over 100 children annually, from grades K to 12, providing a safe space for students to come for a free meal, homework help, art activities, S.T.E.A.M. programs, cooking, gardening, and field trips.

We partner with St. Vincent de Paul, Local First Arizona, Mercy House, and La Frontera for drop-in youth programs and occasional special events.



This program is partially funded by our standing service contract with Community Development Partners. Teaching Artists, classroom, art, cooking, and gardening supplies are all supported through individual donations and grants.

### NEW GRANT SUPPORT IN 2025

- Gila River Indian Community
- Diamondbacks Foundation
- Thunderbird Charities
- Mesa Hohokams
- Bashas' Food City



**Santiago, 2nd grade - "This is a good place and I like all the teachers. They take care of us."**

**Beth, Volunteer - "As a retired early childhood and justice studies professor, I welcomed the opportunity to volunteer with Cultural Coalitions' arts-based after-school program. It feels like an extended family setting in which children are respected, provided with a caring, enriching setting where they choose activities including visual arts, music, gardening and cooking/baking, quiet spaces to read or play games, and nourishing food - as well as homework assistance."**



**Brianna, 5th grade - "I like coming here to draw and paint and be with my friends."**

# FESTIVALS

## Mask Alive Festival

Presented by SRP, the 7th Annual Mask Alive Festival took place on Sunday, March 2 at Pioneer Park in Mesa!

Known as the largest gathering of masked performers, the afternoon featured ballet folklórico, mariachi, belly dancing, Chinese Lion Dancers, Japanese Taiko Drummers, and African Stiltwalkers.

Funded in part by SRP, Raza Development Fund, the City of Mesa, and Individual Donors this free event is a community favorite for families who love to come dressed up, wearing their own masks.

### QUOTES FROM THE CROWD

**“SO AWESOME, I CAN'T BELIEVE I HAVEN'T BEEN BEFORE”**

**“KEEP THESE EVENT ALIVE!”**

**“I ENJOYED THE DIVERISTY”**

### # OF DIFFERENT ZIPCODES AT EACH EVENT



## El Puente Festival

Cultural Coalition and Tempe Center for the Arts presented the 13th Annual El Puente Festival on Saturday, April 5. The event youth-centric featured both professional and youth performing artists, authors, storytellers, and community resources.

El Puente, the spanish word for bridge, highlights how we connect generations through the healing power of the cultural arts

This event remains free to all thanks to support from the City of Tempe, SRP, Raza Development Fund, and individual donors.

### QUOTES FROM THE CROWD

**“COOPER & AMI NEZ ARE THE BEST!”**

**“TODO MUY BONITO Y INTERESANTE”**

**“HAVE THE FESTIVAL THE WHOLE DAY”**





## Portal to the Past Festival

Presented by Desert Diamond Casinos, in partnership with S'edav Va'aki Museum, Cultural Coalition's 7th Annual Portal to the Past Festival welcomed visitors to experience full day of culture and history celebrating the water legacy of the Ancestral Sonoran Desert People. Cultural performances, artist demonstrations, a Toka Match, hands-on kids activities, and Museum admission were all included in this free event.

Supported by Desert Diamond Casino, Central Arizona Project, Raza Development Fund, SRP, S'edav Va'aki Museum Foundation, and individual donors.

**Visitors who said they learned something new about indigenous cultures in Arizona:**



## MIKIZTLI: Día de los Muertos Festival

Presented by National Minority Quality Forum, our 14th Annual MIKIZTLI: Día de los Muertos Festival welcomed close to 7,000 attendees for our first evening festival on Saturday, November 1 to a new location at Arizona Center in Downtown Phoenix.

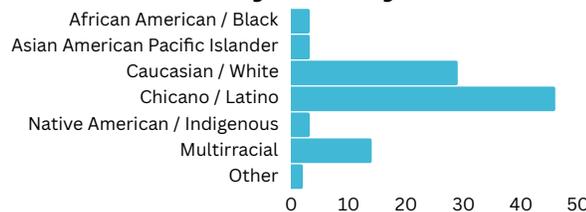
### NEW THIS YEAR:

- Calaca Cantina VIP Area
- Mask Alive Art Collection Gallery exhibit during festival
- Free Photo Booth
- Largest Community Altar

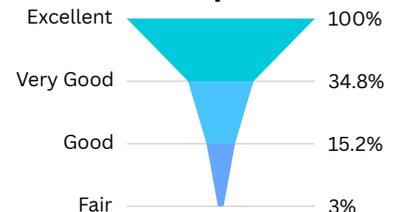
A free cultural arts community event, MIKIZTLI honors the ancestral traditions of the día de los muertos holiday. Supported by National Minority Quality Forum, SRP, Raza Development Fund, Phoenix Office of Arts & Culture, OneAZ Credit Union, individual donors, and Arizona Center.

### Mikiztli Survey Results

#### Culturally Identify



#### Overall experience



**"Loved the ceremonial aspects and las curanderas"**

**"Really liked the new location and the energy it brought."**

# OUTREACH & PROGRAMS

## Community Outreach

Beyond our festivals and After School Arts Program, Cultural Coalition continued connecting with communities around the Valley with our educational outreaches, artist performances, and contracted programs.

### Highlights for 2025:

- Engaged over 21,222 people with the cultural arts
- Provided 34 Different Performances, Programs & Workshops
- Supported over a dozen different artist groups or individuals with over 160 artists combined

## Educational Workshops

With the Mask Alive Art Collection Gallery at the Arizona Center, having a dedicated space to welcome our community to engage their creativity and work with local artists was an amazing experience. In 2025, we provided:

- 12 Mask Making, Beading, Painting, Yoga, and Curandera Workshops in the Mask Alive Art Collection Gallery ALONE
- 10 Mask Making, Flower Crown, and Papel Picado Workshops and Family Art Activities around the Valley

## WORKSHOP PARTICIPANTS SHARED WHAT THEY ENJOYED

**“The excellent feedback from Zarco. Meeting other great artists.”**

**“It was all great! The environment, the art, the engagement and the music!”**

**“The light energy of Rachel and the connection with other participants.”**

## Collaborations & Partnerships

Without a doubt, our most impactful partnership in 2025 was with the Arizona Center. We were also able to connect with new organizations that have lead to future collaborations and partnerships beyond 2025. Cultural Coalition assisted with programing and entertainment for four different día de los muertos celebrations in the Valley at:

- ASU Polytechnic Campus
- Burton Barr Central Library
- Chandler Center for the Arts
- Phoenix Zoo



**ARTISTS, OUTREACHES  
& COMMUNITY EVENTS  
IN 12 DIFFERENT  
ZIP CODES IN 2025:**



# MASK ALIVE! ART COLLECTION

In January 2025, Cultural Coalition was excited to open the long-term pop-up of the Mask Alive Art Collection Gallery at the Arizona Center in Downtown Phoenix!

A free community gathering space for creative, artistic expression that exhibits a global collection of masks and art in celebration of the human cultural practice of storytelling.

The gallery showcased over 200 works of art by Zarco Guerrero, master sculptor, and Cultural Coalition Co-Founder. Drawing from the Artwork Archive of over 500 pieces that span Guerrero's 50 year career, the gallery presented a colorful, joyful, and immersive cultural experience. Visitors experienced the transformative power of the mask as they explored the gallery full of over-sized 10-foot puppets, a quetzalcoatl performance art piece, bronze sculptures, upcycled mandalas, and over 100 different carved and sculpted masks.

 **WELCOMED 3275 VISITORS**

 **HOSTED 7 FIRST FRIDAY & 7 THIRD FRIDAY FREE FAMILY NIGHTS**

 **OFFERED 12 ARTIST WORKSHOPS BY 12 DIFFERENT ARTISTS OR GROUPS**

 **DISPLAYED OVER 300 WORKS OF ART WITH 7 CHANGING EXHIBITS**

**"The mask presentation was so informative and specific to my culture of history & story that I never knew before. I was beautifully transformed"**

**~ Arcelia L., Arizona Center Mask Display Pop-up & Storytelling Attendee**



# LOOKING TO THE FUTURE



Reflecting on the lessons of 2025, it is clearer than ever that our strength lies in the consistent, year-round support of our community. As funding for the arts, humanities, and cultural programming faces ongoing cuts nationwide, the contributions from our individual donors, granting organizations, and corporate sponsors have become our most vital resources. These partnerships allow us to keep our programs free and accessible to the diverse communities we serve.

We have witnessed firsthand how deeply personal the Mask Alive Art Collection gallery was for our visitors. Seeing a dedicated space for Chicano and Indigenous cultures of the Southwest isn't just about art—it's about identity. We remain steadfast in our commitment to providing these safe spaces for appreciation, expression, and connection for people of all ages and backgrounds.

**Together, we are building a future where the vibrant stories of Arizona continue to be told, celebrated, and shared by all.**

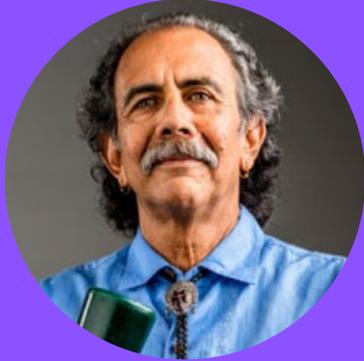
## OUR OBJECTIVES, STRATEGIES, AND GOALS FOR 2026

- Contract a Development Consultant to grow our donor database
- Grow our earned revenue to provide sustainable income for a Program Manager
- Find a new space for Mask Alive Art Collection Gallery Exhibit
- Continue to grow our board of directors



# MEET THE STAFF

THE AWESOME PEOPLE BEHIND OUR ORGANIZATION



**ZARCO GUERRERO**  
ARTISTIC DIRECTOR  
ZARKMASK.COM



**CARMEN GUERRERO**  
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR  
CARMENCREATIONS.COM



**RENEE AGUILAR**  
ASSISTANT DIRECTOR



**STIRLING ANDERSON**  
TEACHING ARTIST  
CREATIVE DESIGN MANAGER



**AMI ROGERS**  
PRODUCER  
EVENTS MANAGER



**ALYSSA MASAQUAPTEWA**  
ART AND COMMUNITY  
ENGAGEMENT COORDINATOR

## OUR AMAZING BOARD:

President -

**Zarco Guerrero**, Artist/Storyteller

Vice President/Treasurer -

**Tom Pynn**, Pynn & Associates

Events Chair -

**Patricia Federico**, Mi Tierra Healing Arts

Fundraising Chair -

**Carmen Cornejo**, Chief Operations  
Officer, Marco E. Garciaacosta Law Group

- **Richard Castillo**, Musician/Attorney at Law
- **Dede Devine**, Community Advocate/Retired CEO of Native American Connections
- **Zarina Guerrero**, Marketing & Social Entrepreneurship Specialist
- **Jesus Hernandez**, Media Development Specialist Hernandez Communications

# OUR APPRENTICES & TEACHING ARTISTS

THE AWESOME PEOPLE BEHIND OUR ORGANIZATION

## APPRENTICES



**RACHAEL  
MARSHALL**  
APPRENTICE



**MARSHALL  
VOSLER**  
APPRENTICE



**ALEX  
WILLIAMS**  
APPRENTICE

## TEACHING ARTISTS AT AFTER SCHOOL PROGRAM



**STIRLING ANDERSON**



**EMILY JOHNSON**



**NAHNALAH GUERRERO**



**CANDY WHEELER**



**BETH SWADENER**  
VOLUNTEER



**JAVIER GARDEA**  
MUSIC TEACHER



**ALYSSA LAMONTAGNE-OWENS**  
GARDENING - LOCAL FIRST



**LISA CASTRICHINI**  
COOKING - LOCAL FIRST

## CONTACT US FOR MORE INFORMATION!

Phoenix Office  
2323 N. 3rd St  
Phoenix, AZ 85004

Carmen Guerrero  
carmen@culturalcoalition.com  
(480) 834-5731

Mesa Office  
Rancho del Sol  
701 E Main St  
Mesa, AZ 85203

# THANK YOU ARTISTS

THE AMAZING ARTISTS AT OUR FESTIVALS & PROGRAMS



**BALLET FOLKLORICO  
QUETZALLÍ-AZ**



**COATLICUE DANZA  
MEXICA**



**PRIMAVERA FOLKLORICO**



**HARMONY PROJECT**



**INDIGENOUS  
ENTERPRISE**



**MARIACHI RUBOR**

## MORE ARTISTS & PARTNERS

Adrian Garcia  
Astarte Belly Dancing  
Birds Singing & Dancing by the River  
Borderlands Theater  
Cooper "The Hooper" Nez  
Cruz Waila Band  
Dayel Guzman  
Desert Dance Theater  
Desert Sounds Mariachi  
Felicia Cocotzin Ruiz  
Earth Surface People  
Edgar Alejandro Gamez Sosa  
Felipa Lerma  
Great Arizona Puppet Theater  
Gustavo Angeles

Jumoke Farrow Stilt Walkers  
Keli Akimel Traditional Basket Dancers & Singers  
Koshio Gumi  
Lalo Cota  
Mariachi Hermanas del Corazon  
Nicol Carlos  
OXDX Clothing  
Patiloni Collective  
QVLN-Quetzal Guerrero  
Rosie's House Academy  
Suk Fuldwilder  
Violet Duncan  
Wolf Loring  
World Martial Arts Academy Lion Dance  
Zúm Zúm Zúm

# THANK YOU FOR SUPPORTING CULTURAL COALITION

## ANNUAL SUPPORTERS



RDF



## UPPER LEVEL SUPPORTERS



## PROGRAM LEVEL SUPPORTERS

APS

Blick Art Materials  
CallChristinaNow.com  
Central Arizona Project  
City of Mesa  
Food City  
JARS Cannabis  
La Clinical Natural  
Local First Arizona

Mesa Hohokams

New Frontier Immigration Law  
Reproductive Freedom for All  
S'edav Va'aki Foundation  
Somos Dental  
Southwest Human Development  
The Society of St. Vincent de Paul  
Tiny Teeth Kids' Dentistry & Orthodontics  
YWCA

## STAY CONNECTED TO CULTURAL COALITION



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