



CNP WORKING PAPER

**Nonprofits Serving the Latino
Community in the Washington,
D.C., Metropolitan Area**

*A Portrait of Their
Features and Activities*

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A Portrait of Their Features and Activities

According to the U.S. Census Bureau, Latinos are the second-largest minority group in the Washington, D.C., metropolitan area, after African Americans.¹ In the year 2000, 432,003 Latinos (8.8 percent of the total population) were living in the region. This figure represents nearly a twofold increase in the number residing in the area since 1990 (224,786). Much of this growth has been related to the rise in immigration. Among all Latinos living in the region in 2000, 62 percent were foreign born.²

As an ethnic minority group largely composed of immigrants or children of immigrants, Latinos have specific social, economic, language, and cultural needs. In 1999, the Latino population's poverty rate in the Washington, D.C., region was 12.5 percent, compared with 6.9 percent for non-Latinos.³ Among those living below the poverty level, 68 percent were foreign born. In addition, almost half the Latino population age 5 and older residing in the D.C. area speaks English less than "very well."⁴ Further, because 46 percent of Latinos in the nation's capital area are not citizens, they have no or limited access to various benefits including voting, employment-related programs (such as unemployment insurance and Social Security), and social welfare programs (such as food stamps, Medicaid, and Temporary Assistance for Needy Families) (DeSipio and de la Garza 1998).

Several scholarly articles have emphasized the role of community-based organizations, and especially immigrant and ethnic organizations, in the social, economic, and political incorporation of immigrants or ethnic minorities.⁵ Nonprofit organizations, in particular, have been depicted as playing a critical part in satisfying the needs and voicing the claims of these groups. What remains less known is how well immigrant and ethnic organizations are prepared to address the demands of and advocate for the growing Latino community in the D.C. region.

This paper offers a descriptive analysis of the Latino nonprofit sector in the Washington, D.C., metropolitan area. The purpose is to examine to what extent the Latino nonprofit sector is equipped to face the needs of a community that has been experi-

encing significant quantitative and qualitative changes over the past few years.

Using data on nonprofit organizations from the National Center for Charitable Statistics (NCCS) for fiscal years 2003 and circa 2005, this report portrays the type, size, age, and location of the Latino nonprofit sector.⁶ The NCCS data are based on information filed by organizations with the U.S. Internal Revenue Service (IRS). Because religious congregations are not required by law to register or file Forms 990 with the IRS, the data on churches in the NCCS dataset are very limited. Given that churches play a critical role in the lives of Latinos, both as civic associations⁷ and as service providers, a survey with religious congregations operating in the area was also conducted to fill that gap.

Approach and Data

Latino Nonprofit Organizations in the NCCS

Latino nonprofit organizations are conceived as organizations whose missions explicitly concentrate on Latino population issues or have a history of primarily serving the Latino community (based on Cordero-Guzman 2005). In this paper, we view them as ethnic and immigrant organizations, given that the community they serve is composed of both foreign-born and American-born Latinos. Two clarifications bear noting on this point. One, organizations that serve larger communities encompassing—but not primarily focusing on—Latinos (such as immigrant-serving organizations or nonprofits whose missions are to assist vulnerable groups in general) were excluded from the universe of Latino nonprofits. Two, many Latino nonprofits analyzed in this piece do not serve the Latino community exclusively but serve other populations as well.

Additionally, we only selected organizations that operate at the local level. Omitted from the analysis is an extended list of national organizations, which are either federations of organizations that run programs at the community level across the country or organizations that chiefly focus on issues of national scope. Given the unique status of Washington, D.C., as the nation's capital, many national organizations have their headquarters in this area. It is important to underscore, however, that although the national organizations are not primarily involved in local problems, their location in the region has eventually turned them into central actors in local politics regarding Latino issues.

The identification of Latino organizations in the NCCS datasets was completed in multiple steps. First, we examined the IRS records of those organizations flagged as international. The examination was carried out by looking at the program description of each record, and cross-checking with the web site or calling the organization in cases that were unclear. Second, multiple searches were conducted on the data using words that evoked a connection with Latin America, including many words in Spanish. Third, we double-checked with multiple directories of Latino nonprofits in the United States, published by Latino national or regional federations, and the local and state governments in Washington, D.C., Maryland, and Virginia. Finally, we distinguished between national and local organizations. The final list encompassed 75 active local organizations.

Religious Congregations Serving the Latino Community Telephone Survey

The data on religious congregations in the Washington, D.C., metropolitan area were collected through a survey conducted over the phone. Given the absence of an exhaustive directory on congregations of different denominations providing services to the Latino community, the identification of Latino churches was carried out through the combined use of multiple listings, including the Hispanic Yellow Pages, the Hispanic Pastoral Ministry of the Catholic Archdiocese of Washington, a private compilation of ethnic churches, and those listed with a Spanish identifier in Google local. Because many contact numbers listed were outdated (small churches, for example, tend to move often), and in many cases we were unable to talk to anyone in the congregation, we attempted to contact all the congregations rather than select a random sample.

Thirty-seven congregations responded to our survey. The sample includes organizations from different Christian denominations, including Adventists, Baptists, Catholics, Episcopalians, Evangelicals, Lutherans, Methodists, and Presbyterians. To be included in our sample, the churches must provide specific services to the Spanish-speaking community. The range spans from those that view themselves as Hispanic churches to those whose only specific link with the Latino community is that they offer religious services in Spanish. Although the total universe of Christian religious congregations serving the Latino community is difficult to estimate—especially because in some denominations, the congregations tend to be less stable and the information is decentralized—we were able to confirm the existence of 116 congregations offering at

least some service specifically directed to the Spanish-speaking population (either because someone answered the phone, they had voicemail with a message referring to the church, or it was confirmed by other informants). Many other congregations offering specific services for the Spanish-speaking community likely exist, as our listings suggest. Unfortunately, we were unable to confirm their existence—either because the phone numbers listed were disconnected or not in service, or because we encountered a generic greeting message in the answering machine without any reference to the congregation.

The questionnaire used in the survey included items on the location, size, and age of the congregation; the size and ethnic composition of its members; the services provided; the profile of the staff; collaboration with other organizations; advocacy practices; and financial aspects of the church.

Some limitations of the survey's approach warrant mention. In particular, questions regarding church advocacy and finances appeared to be especially sensitive. In the future, administering an in-person survey may be a more effective strategy to overcome these challenges.

Findings

Analyses of the NCCS data and telephone survey revealed important insights for understanding how the Latino population in the Washington, D.C., metropolitan area is being served by Latino nonprofits and religious congregations. Our examination also highlighted trends in the settlement patterns of Latinos in contrast to the location of service provision. The main findings of the study include the following:

1. Latino-serving nonprofits in the Washington, D.C., metropolitan area deliver a diverse array of services and activities

Locally based Latino nonprofits provide a wide range of services, from the traditional areas of education and health to more specialized activities regarding immigration, legal issues, and cultural awareness (table 1). Many of these organizations carry out several missions. However, because nonprofits are classified by only one primary purpose in this analysis,⁸ overlaps in service provision are not captured here.

The most prevalent type of Latino-serving organization focuses on some form of education. Representing 17 percent of all nonprofits, these include programs in English as a second language, literacy, computer training, U.S. citi-

Table 1 Type of Nonprofits Serving the Latino Population in the Washington, D.C., Metropolitan Area

Type of nonprofit	Number	Percent
Education	13	17
Children and youth services	11	15
Religion-related	10	13
Ethnic and immigrant centers	9	12
Health	7	9
Arts, culture, and humanities	6	8
Housing and shelter	4	5
Family services	4	5
Legal-related	3	4
Senior centers	2	3
Civil rights, social action, and advocacy	2	3
Community improvement and capacity building	2	3
Employment	1	1
Developmentally disabled centers	1	1
Total	75	100

Source: The Urban Institute National Center for Charitable Statistics Core File (Public Charities, circa 2005).

Note: Percentages may not add to 100 because of rounding.

zenship classes, tutoring, preschool and after-school programs, and safety training, among others.

Children and youth services centers are the second most common type of nonprofit provider (15 percent). Child day care, gang violence prevention, counseling on drug and substance abuse, parent workshops, preschool programs, bilingual education, arts programs, and technology education for parents, as well as tutoring and mentoring, sports programs, health education and disease prevention, and job training for youth are among the activities carried out by these organizations.

Although religious organizations serving the Latino population encompass a vast universe, only a few filed the 990 Form with the IRS in the fiscal year 2005—making up 13 percent of the total number of Latino organizations in our sample.

Twelve percent of the nonprofits examined are classified as ethnic and immigrant centers. This category denotes organizations that deliver or coordinate a wide variety of programs and services structured to meet the social, educational, economic, recreational, and other needs of specific ethnic or immigrant groups. Among the programs listed by these centers are legal assistance services, employment and training centers, housing and civil rights counseling, health services, education programs, language training, and translation services.

Health care constitutes one of the most challenging problems affecting Latinos residing in the area. According to a survey conducted in 2004 in the District of Columbia, 41.5 percent of the Latinos residing in the District alone had no form of health insurance and 32 percent had not seen a doctor in over two years (McClure and Jerger 2005). Analysis of NCCS data suggests that health-related nonprofits serving Latinos have assumed a crucial role in addressing this need. Specifically, 9 percent of the Latino nonprofits are devoted to health in some capacity—either as community clinics, mental health counseling centers, health support groups, or substance abuse prevention and treatment centers.

Other types of Latino nonprofits center their activities on arts, culture, and humanities (8 percent); housing and shelter (5 percent); family services (5 percent); and legal services (4 percent).

While the majority of Latino nonprofits operating in the area are somewhat specialized, in practice most represent hybrid organizational forms,⁹ assisting the population on a broad spectrum of issues. In particular, many organizations studied often combine service provision with either formal or informal advocacy practices for the community they serve.¹⁰ Heads of these nonprofits are commonly charged with voicing the demands of, or giving a voice to, the Latino community, operating as the channels through which Latinos’ private problems are turned into social issues.

2. Most Latino nonprofits are relatively small organizations

In terms of finances, the universe of nonprofits primarily serving Latinos registered with the IRS accounts for total annual revenues of over \$87 million, annual total expenses of over \$81 million, and assets of nearly \$57 million. Of these organizations, over half are small in size, with total revenues under \$500,000.¹¹ At the other end of the spec-

trum, large organizations operating with budgets of \$2 million or more make up only 13 percent of the total (table 2).

For the most part, Latino-serving nonprofits in the region have few assets upon which to draw in times of financial need. Forty percent of these groups have assets below \$100,000, and an additional 10 percent report assets between \$100,000 and \$200,000. Only 7 of the 75 nonprofits in the study had assets of more than \$3 million.¹²

In the universe of Latino nonprofits currently operating in the area, younger organizations tend to be smaller. Among the organizations created during the 1970s and 1980s, the overwhelming majority is medium or large. The trend reverses for nonprofits founded in the 1990s and 2000s, which are generally small (table 3). This suggests either that young organizations have more constraints to survive than those already consolidated or that financial capacity strengthening takes time.

3. Latino-serving nonprofits are funded roughly equally by contributions from government, private donors, and other sources

Looking at funding sources, the sector’s total revenue is divided rather evenly among government contributions, private donations, and other sources (table 4).¹³ However, only 55 percent of the nonprofits in the sample receive any money from the government—a small proportion compared to the large share of organizations receiving any funding from private donations (93 percent) or other sources (also 93 percent). In addition, government contributions tend to be more concentrated in larger organizations. While 39 percent of the revenues of large organizations come from government sources, in small organizations government funds only account for 13 percent of the total revenues (table 5). Instead, small organizations tend to rely heavily on direct and indirect private

Table 2 Financial Aspects of Latino Nonprofits

	Small (<\$500,000)		Medium (\$500,000– \$1,999,999)		Large (\$2 million+)		Total (\$)	Mean (\$)	Standard deviation
	#	%	#	%	#	%			
Total revenue	38	50.7	27	36.0	10	13.3	87,046,718	1,160,623	1,784,690
Total expenses	40	53.3	26	34.7	9	12.0	81,128,249	1,081,710	1,748,464
Total assets	53	70.7	14	18.7	8	10.7	56,781,990	757,093	1,437,348

Source: The Urban Institute National Center for Charitable Statistics Core File (Public Charities, circa 2005).

Note: Percentages may not add to 100 because of rounding.

Table 3 Organizations' Ruling Decade by Size

Ruling decade	Small (<\$500,000)		Medium (\$500,000–\$1,999,999)		Large (\$2 million+)		Total	
	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
	1970s	1	3	10	37	3	30	14
1980s	3	8	5	18	3	30	11	15
1990s	23	62	8	30	3	30	34	46
2000s	10	27	4	15	1	10	15	20
Total	37	100	27	100	10	100	74	100

Source: The Urban Institute National Center for Charitable Statistics Core File (Public Charities, circa 2005).

Note: "Ruling decade" is the decade of the IRS ruling or determination letter recognizing an organization's exempt status.

support, including contributions, gifts, grants, and bequests from the public.

Although government funds represent an important proportion of the total revenues received by the sector—accounting for 36 percent of total income of organiza-

tions¹⁴—this level is substantially lower than the share that government funds represents for immigrant and ethnic organizations in some other cities in the United States. For example, government funds make up 56 percent of the total income of immigrant and ethnic organizations in New York City (Cordero-Guzman 2005) and over 55 percent in San Francisco (de Graauw 2007).

In terms of area of activity, the largest portion of government funds is allocated to health-related agencies (40 percent), followed by education (29 percent), family services (14 percent), and ethnic and immigrant centers (8 percent, as shown in table 6). Other areas funded by the government include children and youth services, housing and shelter, and legal-related services.

4. The creation of Latino nonprofits in the Washington, D.C., metropolitan area increased in the 1990s

Based on the NCCS data, the number of Latino organizations filing Forms 990 rose 150 percent (from 30 to 75)

Table 4 Latino Nonprofits' Funding Sources

	Total Funds from Each Source		Mean (\$)	Standard deviation	Orgs. Receiving Funds from Source	
	\$	%			#	% of Latino nonprofits
Government contributions	23,472,961	35	391,216	1,000,083	33	55
Private contributions	21,690,507	32	361,508	509,617	56	93
Other revenues	21,699,120	32	361,652	902,695	55	93
Total	66,862,588	100				

Source: The Urban Institute, GuideStar-National Center for Charitable Statistics National Nonprofit Research Database (2003).

Notes: Private contributions include contributions, gifts, grants, and bequests that the organization received directly or indirectly from the public. Other revenues comprise membership dues, interest, dividends, rental income, other investment, sales of goods, and revenue from special events and activities. Percentages may not add to 100 because of rounding.

Table 5 Source of Funding by Organization Size

	Small (< \$500,000)		Medium (\$500,000–\$1,999,999)		Large (\$2 million+)	
	\$	%	\$	%	\$	%
	Government contributions	926,146	13	6,137,097	34	16,409,718
Private contributions	4,785,135	68	7,404,506	41	9,500,866	23
Other revenues	1,292,425	18	4,729,677	26	15,677,018	38
Total	7,003,706	100	18,271,280	100	41,587,602	100

Source: The Urban Institute, GuideStar-National Center for Charitable Statistics National Nonprofit Research Database (2003).

Notes: Private contributions include contributions, gifts, grants, and bequests that the organization received directly or indirectly from the public. Other revenues comprise membership dues, interest, dividends, rental income, other investment, sales of goods, and revenue from special events and activities. Percentages may not add to 100 because of rounding.

Table 6 Government Contributions to Latino Nonprofits by Area of Activity

Area of activity	\$	%
Health	9,467,200	40
Education	6,855,231	29
Family services	3,348,911	14
Ethnic and immigrant centers	1,777,426	8
Children and youth services	707,511	3
Housing and shelter	604,363	3
Legal-related	488,793	2
Others	223,526	1
Total	23,472,961	100

Source: The Urban Institute, GuideStar-National Center for Charitable Statistics National Nonprofit Research Database (2003).

between 1991 and 2005.¹⁵ Of all the Latino nonprofits active and filing Form 990 returns in 2005, 46 percent were created during the 1990s (table 7). This jump in the creation of new agencies coincided with the increase in Latino migration during that decade and with an upsurge in the visibility of Latinos in the area. The latter was provoked by the riots of Mount Pleasant of 1991 and the intense mobilization of the community that followed. Both the creation of new organizations and the consolidation of older ones suggest the existence of an increase in the availability of funds for social programs targeting the Latino community during the 1990s. Consistent with this idea, the combined total annual revenues of Latino nonprofits in the D.C. area increased 569 percent (from \$13 million to \$87 million) from 1991 to 2005.¹⁶

5. While the Latino population is widely dispersed throughout the metropolitan area, Latino nonprofits are mostly concentrated in the District

Latinos in general, and Latin American immigrants in particular, are widely dispersed throughout the Washington, D.C., metropolitan area. Although there are some important concentrations of Latino immigrants in such neighborhoods as Columbia Pike in Virginia, Langley Park/Hyattsville and Silver Spring/Wheaton in Maryland, and Mount Pleasant/Adams Morgan in the District of Columbia, Latin American immigrants are not clustered into ethnically homogeneous residential enclaves (Singer et al. 2001). Further, the Latino population in the region underwent a noticeable suburbanization during the last decade. In 2000, only 10.4 percent of the all Latinos in the

Table 7 Organizations' Ruling Decade by Location

Decade	District of Columbia		Maryland		Virginia		Total	
	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
1970s	11	24	2	15	1	6	14	19
1980s	8	18	2	15	1	6	11	15
1990s	18	40	5	39	11	69	34	46
2000s	8	18	4	31	3	19	15	20
Total	45	100	13	100	16	100	74	100

Source: The Urban Institute National Center for Charitable Statistics Core File (Public Charities, circa 2005).

Note: "Ruling decade" is the decade of the IRS ruling or determination letter recognizing an organization's exempt status.

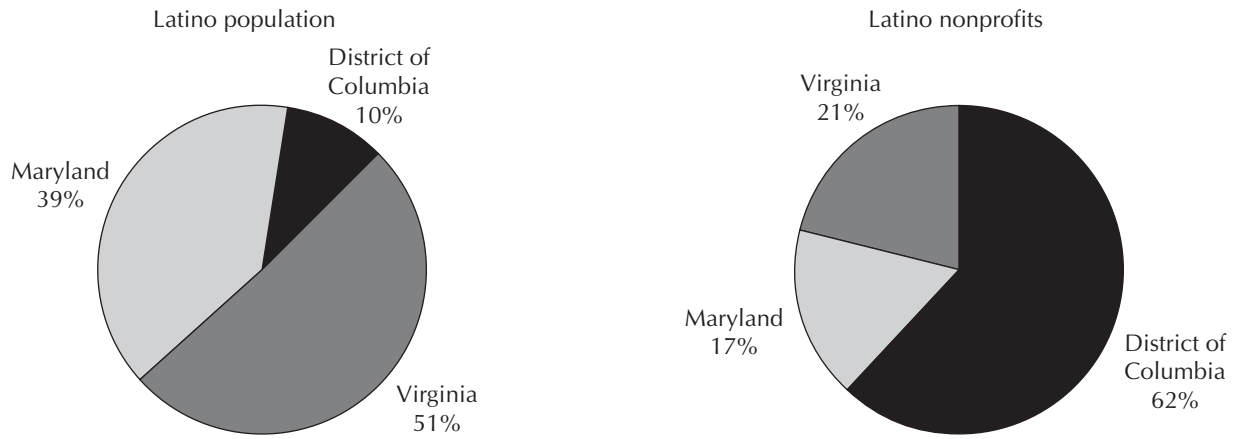
metropolitan area resided in the District—down from 14.6 percent in 1990.¹⁷

The geographic diffusion of the Latino population in the metropolitan area contrasts sharply with the concentration of Latino organizations in the District (see figure 1). Over 60 percent of active organizations in the metropolitan area run their operations in the District of Columbia. The remaining organizations are split between Virginia (21 percent) and Maryland (17 percent). This trend is accentuated by the fact that 90 percent of large organizations (those with total annual revenues of at least \$2 million) and 74 percent of medium organizations (those with total annual revenues between \$500,000 and \$1,999,999) are located in the District. By contrast, most (55 percent) smaller organizations are situated in the suburbs of Maryland or Virginia (table 8).

Although spatial proximity is often perceived as an indicator of access to services (see Truelove 2000 and Hutcheson and Dominguez 1986), users of District services quite frequently reside in the suburbs. In recent years, some large organizations serving the Latino community in the District of Columbia have been adapting to this new geodemographic reality by either opening new facilities in the suburbs or providing expertise to other organizations that provide services in different Maryland and Virginia counties.

While a noticeable concentration of nonprofits exists in the District, such concentration has become less prominent over time. In fact, the proportion of new organizations created in D.C. over the total created in the metropolitan area tended to decrease each successive decade after the 1970s. By contrast, the establishment of new organizations tended to move increasingly to the suburbs.

Figure 1 Distribution of the Latino Population and Latino Nonprofits in the Washington, D.C., Metropolitan Area



Sources: The Urban Institute National Center for Charitable Statistics Core File (Public Charities, circa 2005) and Census 2000 Summary File 1, 100-Percent Data.

6. While churches have several established programs, most of their social services are informal and emergency-related

The lion’s share of churches carry out a broad spectrum of activities beyond their spiritual missions. Three-quarters of the congregations surveyed reported performing activities in addition to worship services for the Latino community. Supplying food (through food pantries or soup kitchens), providing financial help to the needy, and offering English as a second language lessons are the three most frequent activities. Other common services include supplying clothes, giving informative talks on different issues,

offering legal assistance, and providing specialized education programs.

The services delivered by congregations often address emergency situations. In particular, financial help or food assistance tends to be provided to people who are in special need as a result of temporary unemployment or extraordinary circumstances. In addition, service provision at any given time tends to be dictated by the flow of financial resources. Programs are started and discontinued intermittently, depending on the availability of funds. Most congregations surveyed rely almost exclusively on private donations. Only a few received additional funding from other sources, such as fees for services (e.g., when a school is attached to the church) or the ecclesiastical dioceses or mother institutions to which they are linked.

Table 8 Organizations’ Location by Size

	Small (<\$500,000)		Medium (\$500,000–\$1,999,999)		Large (\$2 million+)		Total	
	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
District of Columbia	17	45	20	74	9	90	46	61
Maryland	8	21	4	15	1	10	13	17
Virginia	13	34	3	11	0	0	16	21
Total	38	100	27	100	10	100	75	100

Source: The Urban Institute National Center for Charitable Statistics Core File (Public Charities, circa 2005).

Notes: “Ruling decade” is the decade of the IRS ruling or determination letter recognizing an organization’s exempt status. Percentages may not add to 100 because of rounding.

7. Congregations have a strong presence in the suburbs

Churches serving the Spanish-speaking community are highly dispersed across the Washington, D.C., metropolitan area, and have a singularly important presence in the suburbs. Of the 116 churches identified as specifically serving the Latino population, approximately 20 percent are located in the District, with the remainder divided between the suburbs of Maryland and Virginia. In our sample, 19 percent of the congregations surveyed are located in the District of Columbia, 32 percent in Maryland, and 48 percent in Virginia. This geographic dispersion suggests

religious congregations may reach the Latino population more easily than nonprofits.

8. While there is a broad range in church size, larger congregations tend to have more diverse memberships

Great variation exists in congregation size. Whereas 37 percent of churches reported having less than 200 members, 27 percent had between 200 and 999 members, and 34 percent declared having more than 1,000 members.¹⁸ Among the churches surveyed, half considered themselves exclusively Latino congregations, with a 100 percent Latino membership; about a quarter (23 percent) reported having between 50 and 99 percent of Latinos among their members; and the remaining 27 percent indicated having less than 50 percent of Latinos among their parishioners.

A remarkable trend is that as congregations increase in size, so does diversity. Smaller congregations tend to be entirely Latino. Whereas more than 90 percent of the smaller churches report that all their members are Latino, less than 20 percent of the larger congregations have a similar composition. Because of their more diverse membership, larger churches appear to be more favorable sites for the development of social capital of the “bridging” type—which involves establishing links with others that are dissimilar to oneself (Putnam 2000). In fact, some respondents indicated that social and humanitarian programs carried out in the church were possible because of the investment that “American” parishioners made to help minorities in need.

9. Collaboration is an integral part of how congregations provide services

Although many congregations directly provide services to the Latino community, an important part of their work is accomplished through informal collaborations with local nonprofits. Eighty-eight percent of the congregations surveyed reported working with other community organizations or churches in various capacities. In some cases, churches operate as the channel through which other organizations provide services, including health screenings, vaccinations, Social Security orientations, workshops on citizenship and immigration paperwork handling, trainings in computer use or English, orientations on affordable housing, and talks on several issues such as preventive health, drug abuse, domestic violence, and tax assistance. Other collaborations involve congregation staff

participating in the activities of other organizations such as schools, prisons, and hospitals. For example, staff engage in programs to prevent children from dropping out of school, intervene as translators in teacher-parents meetings, tutor in prisons, and accompany members of the church on doctor’s visits to facilitate communication and overcome language barriers.

Inter-organizational cooperation also takes place through informal referral practices. When individual needs cannot be directly addressed by the church itself, the church acts as a referral source. At other times, other organizations may refer individuals to churches for particular services. These mutual referrals generally transpire with organizations where there is some tradition of cooperation. Some of the churches, indeed, have closer links with community service organizations that were founded as appendages of the churches themselves once their capacity to provide social services was overwhelmed.

Embassies of Latin American countries also partner with churches in outreach activities oriented toward their citizens residing in the D.C. area. These activities tend to be related to immigration paperwork.

10. Religious institutions serve directly and indirectly as sources of community empowerment

Although a number of congregations surveyed were cautious about being associated with politics, many of them either directly or indirectly engage in activities leading to the empowerment of the Latino community. Of the congregations that participated in our survey, 54 percent assist the community through their work with other organizations or volunteers/attorneys who come to the church, especially with regard to obtaining documentation, including driver’s licenses, green cards, citizenship applications, or Temporary Protected Status forms. The types of assistance provided range from helping people with specific requests, to offering talks on citizenship and immigration, to referring people to places where they can receive professional help.

In addition to the direct provision of services, congregations engage in advocacy activities. For example, religious institutions reported encouraging people to attend rallies (40 percent) or sign petitions (32 percent). Public participation is aided by talking about policy issues during sermons, welcoming advocacy organizations to the church to invite people to attend events or sign petitions, and talking informally or unofficially about matters relating to public policy. About a quarter (24 percent) of the sample

reported engaging in campaigns or lobbying on issues that would benefit the community they serve.

Conclusions and Future Lines of Research

As the current flow of immigration continues to grow and the Latino population becomes increasingly large, diverse, and geographically dispersed throughout the Washington, D.C., metropolitan area, Latino nonprofits face new challenges.

Findings from this analysis indicate that the nonprofit sector devoted to serving the Latino community covers a wide spectrum of services, ranging from issues specifically affecting the immigrant community (not only Latinos), such as legal assistance on immigration and language programs, to more general social services benefiting other population groups as well. These services are provided by both community organizations and religious congregations. Collectively, these nonprofits make the sector a crucial asset for the community at large.

Provision of these services has increasingly moved outside the city. The new trend in Latinos' settlement patterns away from the District to its outer suburbs has been simultaneously accompanied by a gradual increase in the presence of Latino organizations in the suburbs and an organizational adaptation of already existing major nonprofits in order to face this reality—either by receiving constituents from other localities or by expanding the services into the suburbs.

Additional data, however, are necessary to assess gaps in service availability. In this regard, new research efforts should examine how often and in what ways the community uses Latino nonprofits. A survey conducted with Latino residents in the area, aimed at identifying patterns of use of community services, would be a pertinent way to improve the understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the sector from the demand side.

At the same time, the economic and organizational character of Latino nonprofits affects their ability to serve the community. In terms of funding, although roughly a third of the total financial support for the sector comes from the government, Latino nonprofits also rely heavily on private contributions and other sources. In particular, government support tends to be more prevalent in large organizations, and appears to be concentrated in the areas of health, education, family services, and immigration services. While Latino nonprofits constitute a significant economic presence in the region, the majority of the organizations remain small.

Overall, the level of government support for the Latino nonprofit sector in the Washington, D.C., region is low compared to the share that government funds represent for immigrant and ethnic organizations in some other locales. The reason for this difference is not clear, and further research is needed to examine the extent to which local or state governments (the traditional sources of public contributions) are financially supporting Latino nonprofits in the different jurisdictions that make up the metropolitan area.

Finally, in its structure, the Latino organizational capital bears a greater resemblance to a network of actors variously linked among themselves and with the community than a collection of discrete organizations. Churches, with their widespread presence and manifold links with nonprofits, play a critical role in both expanding and making a wide variety of resources available to the community. An examination of patterns of collaboration among nonprofits serving Latinos in the area would also contribute to a more dynamic understanding of the actual and potential impact of the nonprofit sector in the community.

Notes

1. From the Census 2000 Summary File 1, 100-Percent Data.
2. From the Census 2000 Summary File 4, 100-Sample Data.
3. From the Census 2000 Summary File 4, 100-Sample Data.
4. From the 2005 American Community Survey.
5. See, for example, Abraham (1995), Bloemraad (2005), Cordero-Guzman (2005), Cortes (1998), García and de la Garza (1985), Hutcheson and Dominguez (1986), Koldewyn (1992), Minkoff (2002), Schrover and Vermeulen (2005), and Truelove (2000).
6. Only nonprofit organizations with more than \$25,000 in annual gross receipts are required to file Form 990 with the IRS. Consequently, small organizations that do not complete Form 990 are not in the dataset and were not included in our analysis.
7. See Jones-Correa and Leal (2001).
8. For the analysis of organizational purpose we used the NTEE (National Taxonomy of Exempt Entities) Classification System developed by the National Center for Charitable Statistics as part of its keyword searching criteria.
9. A detailed analysis of hybrid forms of ethnic organizations can be found in Minkoff (2002).
10. By formal, we mean explicitly specified in their missions or program descriptions.
11. Given that organizations with annual gross receipts below \$25,000 are not required to file Form 990 with the IRS and are thus excluded from the analysis, this number of small nonprofits in the area would likely be even higher.
12. From the Urban Institute National Center for Charitable Statistics Core File (Public Charities, circa 2005).
13. Private contributions include contributions, gifts, grants, and bequests that the organization received directly or indirectly from the public. Other revenues comprise membership dues, interest, dividends, rental income, other investment, sales of goods, and revenue from special events and activities.
14. Churches were not included in the calculation.

15. From the Urban Institute National Center for Charitable Statistics Core File (Public Charities, circa 1991 and 2005).
16. From the Urban Institute National Center for Charitable Statistics Core File (Public Charities, circa 1991 and 2005).
17. From the Census 2000 Summary File 1, 100-Percent Data, and Census 1990 Summary Tape File 1, 100-Percent Data.
18. Several informants from the churches we surveyed referred to the difficulty in estimating the number of Latino members of the congregation. Although most have a list of members who are formally registered, the number of active members was in many cases described as unstable. This is particularly the case in larger congregations. The fluctuations were associated with the facts that Latinos tend to move often or that they prefer not to register. Additionally, since some Latino members attend English services (when those are also offered in the congregation), they are usually excluded from the estimations.

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About the Author

Guillermo Cantor was an emerging scholar in the Urban Institute's Center on Nonprofits and Philanthropy during summer 2007. His current work focuses on patterns of organization and political mobilization among Latinos in the United States. He also has extensive research experience on the role of community and civil society organizations in various development initiatives in Latin America. Mr. Cantor is a doctoral candidate in sociology at the University of Maryland, College Park.