CENTRO DE APOYO FAMILAR

INVITES YOU

20th

CAF
Centro de Apoyo Familiar

ANNIVERSARY



ANNUAL CONFERENCE

"TRANSFORMING COMMUNITIES, EMPOWERING FAMILIES"

FRIDAY DECEMBER 11, 2026

11:30 A.M. TO 4:30 P.M.

13923 MINNIEVILLE RD WOODBRIDGE, VA 22193

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CONFERENCE OVERVIEW

2026 CAF ANNUAL CONFERENCE
TRANSFORMING COMMUNITIES: EMPOWERING FAMILIES

Celebrating 20 years of empowering families and transforming communities, Centro de Apoyo Familiar (CAF) invites community leaders, policymakers, housing professionals, financial experts, environmental advocates, and faith-based partners to come together for a day of collaboration, learning, and collective impact.

This year's conference will explore innovative strategies to strengthen communities through affordable housing development, financial empowerment, wealth creation and preservation, and environmental resilience. Through expert-led panels and engaging discussions, participants will examine how strategic investments, equitable access to resources, and cross-sector partnerships can expand opportunity and improve quality of life for families.

Sessions will highlight practical approaches to increasing affordable housing, leveraging public and private financing, building and preserving wealth within Latino and underserved communities, and creating healthier neighborhoods through environmental initiatives such as urban tree planting. Together, these conversations will address the interconnected challenges of economic mobility, housing stability, intergenerational wealth, and community well-being.

As CAF celebrates two decades of impact, this conference offers an opportunity to reflect on the progress made, strengthen relationships among community partners, and envision new possibilities for the future. Participants will leave with actionable insights, valuable connections, and renewed inspiration to advance equitable opportunities and build thriving communities for generations to come.

Together, we celebrate 20 years of impact—and build a stronger foundation for the next 20

THIS CONFERENCE WILL SERVE AS A PLATFORM FOR DIFFERENT WORKSHOPS AND NETWORKING OPPORTUNITIES:

- **Advancing, Creating, and Preserving Wealth Within Latino and Underserved Communities**
- **Housing Development: Creating Pathways to More Affordable Homes**
- **Environmental Stewardship: Hispanic Leadership in Building Resilient Communities**
- **Annual Impact Highlights, Awards Presentation & Networking Opportunities**

OUR FOUNDERS



WALKIRIA POOL

PRESIDENT AND FOUNDER

Walkiria Pool's professional career includes over 25 years in community development and the housing service industry with a focus on affordable housing and asset development. She earned her MA Community Economic Development from Southern New Hampshire University and a graduate certificate in Women and Politics and Public Policy from the University of Massachusetts in Boston. As an undergraduate Ms. Pool earned her bachelor's degree from the University of Massachusetts in Boston, majoring in Psychology and Sociology. Mrs. Pool was responsible for developing and implementing the Project "Más a ti" for the National Council of La Raza, the first community-based financial institution for low-income families in the nation. Mrs. Pool also served as Youth Program Director in the family Asset Building division of Lawrence Community Works and as an AmeriCorps Vista member at the Allston Brighton Community Development Corporation. She has served on several boards of directors and advisory committees of community-based organizations.



DAMARIS FRIAS

VICEPRESIDENT AND CO-FOUNDER

Damaris Frias co-founded CAF. She is Executive director of CAF's Lawrence, MA office and oversees The Connectors, a national capacity building program for clergy serving Latino churches that prepares them to serve as bridge between their congregations and their communities. Mrs. Frias brings over 25 years of experience in the area of leadership development, management, and program development. She holds a BA in Psychology from University of Massachusetts at Boston and a MA in Mental Health with an specialty in children, youths and families from Southern New Hampshire University.

CONFERENCE SCHEDULE

11:30 a.m. - 12:30 p.m.

Opening Remarks

Registration,
Networking & lunch
Opening Remarks
Welcoming / Awards

12:30 p.m. - 01:30 p.m.

Session 1:
Advancing, Creating, and Preserving Wealth Within Latino and Underserved Communities

Moderator:
Freesi Bonilla
Centro de Apoyo Familiar

01:45 p.m. - 02:45 p.m.

Session 2:
Environmental Stewardship: Hispanic Leadership in Building Resilient Communities

Moderator:
Sunilda Frias
Centro de Apoyo Familiar

03:00 p.m. - 04:00 p.m.

Session 3:
Housing Development: Creating Pathways to More Affordable Homes

Moderator:
Yicaury Melo
Centro de Apoyo Familiar

04:15 p.m. - 04:30 p.m.

Final Remarks

Session 1: Advancing, Creating, and Preserving Wealth Within Latino and Underserved Communities

12:30 p.m. - 01:30 p.m.

Description: Building lasting wealth begins with access to opportunity, trusted guidance, and practical tools that help families transform financial goals into enduring assets. This panel will explore pathways to economic mobility for Latino and underserved communities through homeownership, financial planning, business development, entrepreneurship, and investing.
Expert panelists will examine the social, cultural, and economic barriers that shape wealth creation and discuss how culturally responsive housing counseling, financial education, and equitable access to capital can expand opportunity.

Connecting asset building with long-term preservation, panelists will address estate planning, heirs' property considerations, business succession, and intergenerational wealth transfer. These strategies can help families and business owners protect their investments and preserve the value they build for future generations.

Highlighting community-driven solutions and partnerships among nonprofits, chambers of commerce, financial institutions, and public agencies, this session will offer actionable insights for entrepreneurs, families, community leaders, service providers, and financial professionals. Attendees will leave with a clearer understanding of how business ownership and coordinated support can strengthen financial resilience, create jobs, and build thriving communities.

Session 2: Environmental Stewardship: Hispanic Leadership in Building Resilient Communities

01:45 p.m. - 02:45 p.m.

Description: Hispanic communities play a vital role in building healthier, more resilient communities through environmental stewardship, advocacy, and collective action. This panel will explore how Hispanic leaders and organizations are addressing environmental challenges through reforestation, community gardening, conservation, and public policy.

Through collaboration, community engagement, and environmental leadership, these efforts are strengthening communities, protecting natural resources, and creating a more sustainable future for generations to come.

Session 3: Housing Development: Creating Pathways to More Affordable Homes

03:00 p.m. - 04:00 p.m.

Description: Explore innovative tools, creative financing models, and strategic partnerships that can help communities expand the supply of affordable housing. This panel will examine initiatives such as Yes in God's Backyard (YIGBY) and how policies, land-use strategies, and public-private partnerships can create new opportunities for housing development.

Panelists will discuss the key partners and resources needed to move projects from concept to construction, highlighting creative approaches to financing, land acquisition, and community collaboration. The conversation will also explore the vital role faith institutions can play in addressing the housing crisis by leveraging their land, resources, and trusted community relationships to create affordable homes and strengthen neighborhoods. Attendees will gain practical insights into opportunities for collaboration and actionable strategies to advance housing solutions in their own communities.

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