



ROLE CALL

REACHING OUT LIFTING TO EXCELLENCE



SAVE THE DATE

30 Minutes on a Friday

Join us on Zoom the 1st Friday of each month at 12pm to journal, share and meditate. This refreshing moment is possible thanks to Susan Auld. This women's only program is open to volunteers and POC staff & partners.

December Artisan's Market

Join ROLE Artisan's at Palatine Bank & Trust on Saturday, December 4th and find unique handmade gifts that uplift the POC Studio Sewers and supports our program. More details to come.

Fridays in the Sewing Studio

Fridays are for creativity! We are open from 10 am to 1pm to teach & create! No appointment necessary.

WHAT IS ROLE?

You may know ROLE by our purple shirts speckled throughout the communities we serve. But what exactly does ROLE do? Who are those ladies wearing those shirts and why?

When we started Latina Leadership classes via POC in early 2009, it was in response to a noted need for lifting up the women in our community to self sufficiency. It was 2011 when we finally established **Reaching Out Lifting to Excellence (ROLE)** with a focus on volunteerism, education, employment and case management. Women originally enrolled in the program and received leadership classes, mentorship and case management, while they volunteered. We worked with POC partners to connect them to educational and employment opportunities via case management. The work was done by a team composed of the ROLE Coordinator, Liza Gutierrez, ROLE volunteers, and POC Director, Kathy Millin in conjunction with POC Staff and learning lab volunteers. Clients received educational support in the learning lab and mentoring.

If there is one thing that the Covid 19 Pandemic has taught us, is that we have to be moldable to meet the needs of our clients today. Last year, ROLE changed to meet the demands of living in a pandemic. As you will see in the stories in this newsletter, we still continue to be a strong mechanism that goes above and beyond to lift women up via educational opportunities, connections to employment and case-management. Indeed our dedication to women in our community has not changed, but our mode of delivery has. First, we took our services out to the community during the pandemic. Secondly, we focused on employment of strong leaders in our community. Currently, navigators are trained on immigration rights, eviction prevention and preventing the spread of covid. These are the women you see with our purple ROLE shirts. ROLE supports and continuously trains these volunteers in any way possible as they connect with clients. ROLE staff has also focused on the need for flexible employment for the women in our community that have shown to be leaders. We lift up these women to employment that allows them, as mothers, to work without choosing family over career. Using POC services, we also cross-train women to open up opportunities for job growth. And, due to our years of relationship building and vetting, we help women gain employment. Volunteers and staff continuously help onboard new staff and navigators through English language acquisition, computer skills and technology classes. In addition, women continue to pay it forward by spending time in the Studio, helping raise funds for POC through their crafts, teaching others to sew and making more masks than we can count.

Our future goal is to continuously support our volunteers out in the community. We plan to bring back mentoring and the Latina Leadership program to the classroom, once it is safe to bring back larger groups. We will continue to serve and empower women, to create strong communities through volunteerism, crafting, civic engagement, education and employment.

Who participates in ROLE? First and foremost, POC staff that go beyond and above their duties to support clients. It is not secret that our amazing POC staff donate volunteer hours on a weekly basis. Secondly, you do! If you have helped support a woman in need via POC, connected with us to help during the pandemic in any way, brought an enrichment program to the Studio, or open an employment opportunity for our women, you are ROLE.



**Empowering women.
Building strong communities.**
Partners for Our Communities

Because this pandemic won't stop our **ROLE!**

We know that this pandemic will not last forever. We know that we must have leaders in place in the community, our partner agencies and at our offices. We have interviewed, trained, connected and on boarded the next generation, and helped move up those that have proven to be leaders time and time again. With that in mind, here is a list all of the **women we have lifted up and are now lifting others to excellence.**

- Welcome to the CRC POC front desk Mia S., a Harper Student but more importantly, the daughter of our very own ROLE volunteer, Violeta S. Mia grew up seeing her mother volunteer with ROLE and now work with NCH. It could only be fitting that she starts her employment journey at POC. She is also teaching folkloric dance to children alongside her mother.
- Welcome to CRC POC front desk Cynthia G. Cynthia was a former POC Edgebrook program participant and a Harper graduate. Once we saw her skills, we helped Cynthia become a Bilingual Liaison for CCSD15.
- Isabel V. has helped at Roots Community Garden and is also a CRC preschool mom. Her skills caught our eyes and she is now a CCSD15 Bilingual Liaison.
- Yuli R. was a former ICompete Summer Camp participant. Today she is our CRC Intern via the Palatine Park District and staffs at POC's after school partner program.
- Miluska H. was a ROLE Studio volunteer and Bilingual Liaison for CCSD15. She is now is our Housing Outreach Worker helping case manage clients who are facing evictions and need rental assistance. She is currently enrolled in business classes at Harper.
- Laura R. a long time ROLE volunteer who was also a CCSD15 Bilingual Liaison, is now helping with childcare and putting her amazing artistic abilities to use there.
- Sara R. was our Welcoming Center Staff Support and is Laura R's daughter. She grew up in our Artisan's Market and in Roots Garden. Sara has been promoted to Access to Justice Program Assistant and helps with our navigators in the program while she completed her degree at UIC.
- Sandra L. was our intern at POC last year. Today she has been hired as the POC South Case Manager and keeps hours with Miluska at the CRC POC on Saturdays. Sandra is completing her MSW at Loyola University.
- Grace S. was trained and worked as our Health Outreach Worker and has now found employment via NCH.
- Gloria P. and Adaly G. are now promoted to coordinate the new Parent Mentor Program that we are currently developing within our local schools.
- Aremi A. has been involved with our partner after school program and now is part of our POC CRC front desk staff.
- Maria S. has been helping manage the POC Studio and is now employed thanks to our connections.
- Ruth A. moved from Bilingual Liaison to employment with D211 thanks to our connections.

We ROLE Together. We don't do it alone. You help us lift others up! Thank you to...

- Vicky M. who is part of the Farm to Table Fundraising Committee and helping support POC's human resources.
- Bridget W. who is also a part of the Farm to Table Fundraising Committee and advisor to the new Junior Board at POC.
- Donna T who has relentlessly created masks for all POC sites. Local school nurses have been calling to get Donna's masks that ROLE volunteers supply as needed for students in schools and adults alike.
- Kim H. who has taken the lead at Roots Community Garden, tirelessly mentoring volunteers from D211 and working the garden
- Navreez B. who has supported the garden for several years and helped enable its success.
- Dorothy O. who for years has supported and mentored new POC staff
- Susan A. who during the pandemic has brought self-care for ROLE volunteers and POC CRC agency staff through journaling and introspective programs.
- The team of Susan A., Janet M. and Laura M. who volunteered to hear and tell the stories of our ROLE members in a unique new light. You will see their project at the CRC and in other locations soon. Sneak peek on the right column.
- Sandy G. who has continuously spent every Friday in the POC Studio teaching sewing techniques to women to help them raise funds for themselves and ROLE.
- Kathy M. and Liza G. who weekly donate countless hours of their time to support the POC Studio, navigators, POC staff and clients to ensure that they are lifted up and empowered. And, they do it all with your help! THANK YOU!!

