



Vol 1, No. 3

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## Be a Milwaukee County Policymaker for a Day: Balancing Act Tool Online Now

For the Milwaukee County's 2024 budget, play the role of a Milwaukee County policymaker and decide what is a priority by interacting with the [Balancing Act tool](#).

The [Balancing Act tool](#) is a way to participate in the Milwaukee County budgeting process. The online survey allows you to interact with the County's budget and decide to increase, maintain, or decrease funds allocated for each spending category. Your responses will let decision-makers know what is important to you.

For the first time in over 20 years, Milwaukee County is projecting a surplus in its operating budget in 2024. The \$31.6 million surplus projection is a direct result of [Act 12](#), which was passed by the State of Wisconsin and allowed Milwaukee County to increase its sales tax rate by 0.4 percent.

It is important to note that the surplus position for 2024 is not expected to be permanent because Milwaukee County will continue to have financial challenges to address going forward. Nevertheless, we remain committed to doing what we can to best serve you: Milwaukee County residents. By working together, we can face our challenges head-on, continue to meet the needs of the community and move closer to our race and health equity goals.

Check out the [Balancing Act tool](#) today and tell a neighbor.

## Community Partner Spotlight Feature Debuts

Welcome to the Milwaukee County Equity Compass' newest feature, the "Community Partner Spotlight." In each issue, we will highlight one of our community partners whose efforts are helping create "the healthiest county in Wisconsin" through one or more areas of the social determinants of health (health care, education, economic stability,

neighborhood and built environments, food and nutrition, and community connections). They each have a major impact on a community's health, well-being and quality of life.



Building Community,  
Advancing Hispanics

leaders with HPGM student chapters on Wisconsin College campuses and through its Scholarship Program.


For more than 22 years, [Hispanic Professionals of Greater Milwaukee \(HPGM\)](https://www.hpgm.org) has been working to advance the prosperity and increased representation of Latinos in Wisconsin. HPGM does this by providing its network of over 3,000 members with access to leadership development, mentoring and removing barriers to higher education. Programming and initiatives include Mentor Mindset, Board Pipeline Initiative and summits. It also supports the next generation of

Through our partnership with HPGM, Milwaukee County will increase its visibility as a top employer of choice within Wisconsin's Latino community. This will positively impact the County's ability to recruit Hispanic and Latino talent. Additionally, County departments will gain more exposure to Latino-owned businesses and community organizations. For HPGM, OOE's support allows it to further boost its capacity to be a leading resource for Latino professionals.

To learn more about HPGM and how to become involved, visit online at [hpgm.org](https://www.hpgm.org).



*Attendees listened attentively and took notes during last year's HPGM's Professionals Summit.*



## **Milwaukee County Celebrates Hispanic Heritage Month; Diversity Council Members & NRG Co-Chairs Share the Importance of the Recognition**

In September 2022, Milwaukee County's Department of Human Resources launched its first-ever Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (DEI) Council comprised of over 40 employees across all county departments. The Milwaukee County DEI Council connects DEI activities that are presently ongoing in individual departments and divisions to the broader vision of Milwaukee County, while creating a unified front in the promotion of DEI as a norm at Milwaukee County. As an extension of the DEI Council, Network Resource Groups (NRG) were developed as employee-led, employee-driven groups to promote the personal and professional development of County employees.

The Milwaukee County DEI Council, NRGs, and Office of Equity recognize the importance of Hispanic Heritage Month and recognize all DEI Council and NRG members identifying as Latinx. With special recognition, we honor Regina Flores, Monica Lee, and Eduardo "Eddie" Santiago who hold positions of leadership within the NRGs.



## Regina Flores

Procurement Director  
Department of Administrative Services - Procurement Division  
Arise NRG Executive Sponsor

"Arise has provided a necessary space for Milwaukee County's female employees to build a stronger community by bringing greater visibility and support to the many roles we play that oftentimes go unrecognized. Together, our contributions will benefit Milwaukee County through advocacy, mentorship, intersectional awareness, and overall female empowerment. As a Latina leader, I understand how one's own personal identity can impact growth because of stereotypes we allowed to perpetuate self-doubt because we did not embrace who we are; but today is a new day and we are showing up as our authentic selves, and not watered-down versions others expect from us to appease societal norms. I am excited about our work, and I am committed to advancing racial equity through the DEI Council Arise network resource group. Happy Hispanic Heritage Month!"

## Monica Lee

Deputy Court Clerk  
Milwaukee County Circuit Court  
Mosaic NRG Co-Chair



"Serving as co-chair for Mosaic has been a euphoric experience. I am beyond grateful to work closely with influential leaders of diverse background and contributing towards building a positive change not just within the county, but our communities as well. As a Panamanian, our culture is unified by a common principal--inclusion. It's important for me to establish a diverse workplace where everyone is warmly welcomed, valued and respected."



## Eduardo "Eddie" Santiago

Highway Director  
Milwaukee County Department of Transportation  
Mosaic NRG Executive Sponsor

"As we celebrate Hispanic Heritage month I am reminded of the importance of celebrating our shared similarities within our Latinidad, but always remaining proud of our individual identity that make us so unique, which for me is being Boricua. As the executive sponsor of the Mosaic NRG, I have the pleasure of supporting a group that is led by two wonderful people, Zari and Monica, who take great joy in providing a platform for our Milwaukee County Team to share and celebrate our cultural uniqueness that we all bring to work every day."

## Meet the Staff – Ricardo Wynn

# Ricardo Wynn



**Community Engagement  
Manager**

I serve as the Community Engagement Manager for the Office of Equity and help to make Milwaukee County the healthiest county in the state of Wisconsin.

Through my work, I advance the integration of community engagement principles, such as collaboration and shared leadership, by way of research, teaching, and service activities across Milwaukee County. This will ultimately lead us to achieving racial equity and making Milwaukee County the healthiest in the state.

Contact me for guidance on how to improve your impact by leveraging community engagement that resonates with residents, especially communities of color including QPOC (queer people of color).

When I'm away from work you can always find me spending time with my dog and loved ones.

## Hispanic Heritage Month Events & Activities – September 15-October 15

The Milwaukee County Office of Equity celebrates the contributions of our Hispanic and Latino communities. We are excited to partner with and support several organizations that are catalysts for change and are committed to removing barriers so everyone can achieve their full potential. You are invited to support our community partners by attending the below events.

La Oficina de Equidad del Condado de Milwaukee celebra las contribuciones de nuestras comunidades hispana y latina. Nos entusiasma asociarnos y apoyar a varias organizaciones que son catalizadores del cambio y están comprometidas a eliminar barreras para que todos puedan alcanzar su máximo potencial. Está invitado a apoyar a nuestros socios de la comunidad asistiendo a los siguientes eventos.

**Silver City International Festival – Saturday, September 9, 12 p.m. to 5 p.m., W. National Avenue between 33<sup>rd</sup> and 35<sup>th</sup> Streets**

In its 12<sup>th</sup> year, the Silver City International Festival is presented by the [Ethnic and Diverse Business Coalition \(EDBC\)](#). In addition to celebrating the diversity and culture of our communities, attendees can enjoy and experience Milwaukee’s local business, music, dance, and food at this free event.



**Cine Sin Fronteras – Milwaukee Film September 15-October 15**

[Cine Sin Fronteras \(Cinema Without Borders\)](#) presents screenings and events on a year-round basis that explore and unpack issues surrounding identity, culture, family, history, and modernity within the Latinx diaspora, including stories from the Chicax, Latin American, Indigenous, and Afro-Latinx communities.

- [7th Annual Femme Frontera Filmmaker Showcase](#): September 16
- [Cassandro, the Exotico](#): September 19
- [Boca Chica](#): September 25
- [Fancy Dance](#): October 9
- [Hummingbirds](#): October 12

For details about Hispanic Heritage Month programming, including screenings & events, visit [mkefilm.org/hhm](http://mkefilm.org/hhm).

**[2023 Hispanic Professionals of Greater Milwaukee \(HPGM\) Gala Experience](#)  
[“Somos El Poder \(We Are the Power\),” Friday, September 15, Pfister Hotel, 424 E. Wisconsin Ave.](#)**

HPGM is a catalyst for professional and academic achievement for Latinos in Wisconsin. The annual event allows the organization to support rising leaders, future professionals advancing talent, and the cultivation of strategic relationships. HPGM is one of OOE’s community partners (See above “Community Partner Spotlight” article).

**[CORE El Centro “Momentum” Gala and Fundraiser – Thursday, September 21, Pfister Hotel, 424 E. Wisconsin Ave.](#)**

CORE El Centro is celebrating 23 years of providing the community with healing and wellness services. In the coming year, the organization is committed to serving to over 1,000 Milwaukeeans, helping people in our community treat disease, pain, trauma,

addiction, anxiety, depression, and other health concerns. Core El Centro is one of the OOE's community partners.

**Latino Family Fest & Expo – Saturday, October 28, Location TBD** – Celebrate Latino culture! In its 13<sup>th</sup> year, the event will be filled with activities for children, cultural exhibits, various workshops for adults, live entertainment and more. OOE is among the sponsors of this annual event hosted by El Conquistador Weekly Newspaper.

### More Events in October...

**Sista Strut, Saturday, October 7, 8 a.m. to noon, Marcus Performing Arts Center**  
Presented by WKKV 100.7, Sista Strut addresses the health disparities faced by Black women and celebrates those who are in the battle against cancer, those who have fought and those who have won. Stop by our refreshment station and meet members of our OOE staff.



### **2023 Cultures & Communities Festival, October 5-12**

OOE is excited to be among the sponsors of Milwaukee Film's highly anticipated 2023 Cultures & Communities Festival, scheduled for October 5-12. This eight-day extravaganza celebrates diverse artistic and cultural expressions. It will feature a variety of events like Culture By Design: A Sneaker and Streetwear Summit and the Opening Party with DJ Spinderella. To view the full calendar of films and events visit [2023 Cultures & Communities Guide \(mkefilm.org\)](https://mkefilm.org)



## Building a Healthier Milwaukee County One Reader at a Time

Thank you for reading this issue of the Milwaukee County Equity Compass! Our office believes in building capacity by providing the support that will allow everyone in our community to thrive and prosper. You can help build this type of capacity by forwarding this newsletter to others in your network or encouraging them to sign up for future issues. Share this [link](#) to get them started. Past issues can be found on our webpage.

*The Milwaukee County Office of Equity is catalytic to Milwaukee County's vision to be the healthiest county in Wisconsin by achieving racial equity. We value and empower residents to identify and create impactful change through awareness, responsibility, and action. We work to challenge and change policies, practices, and power structures that have resulted in historic and persistent barriers to equity.*

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