

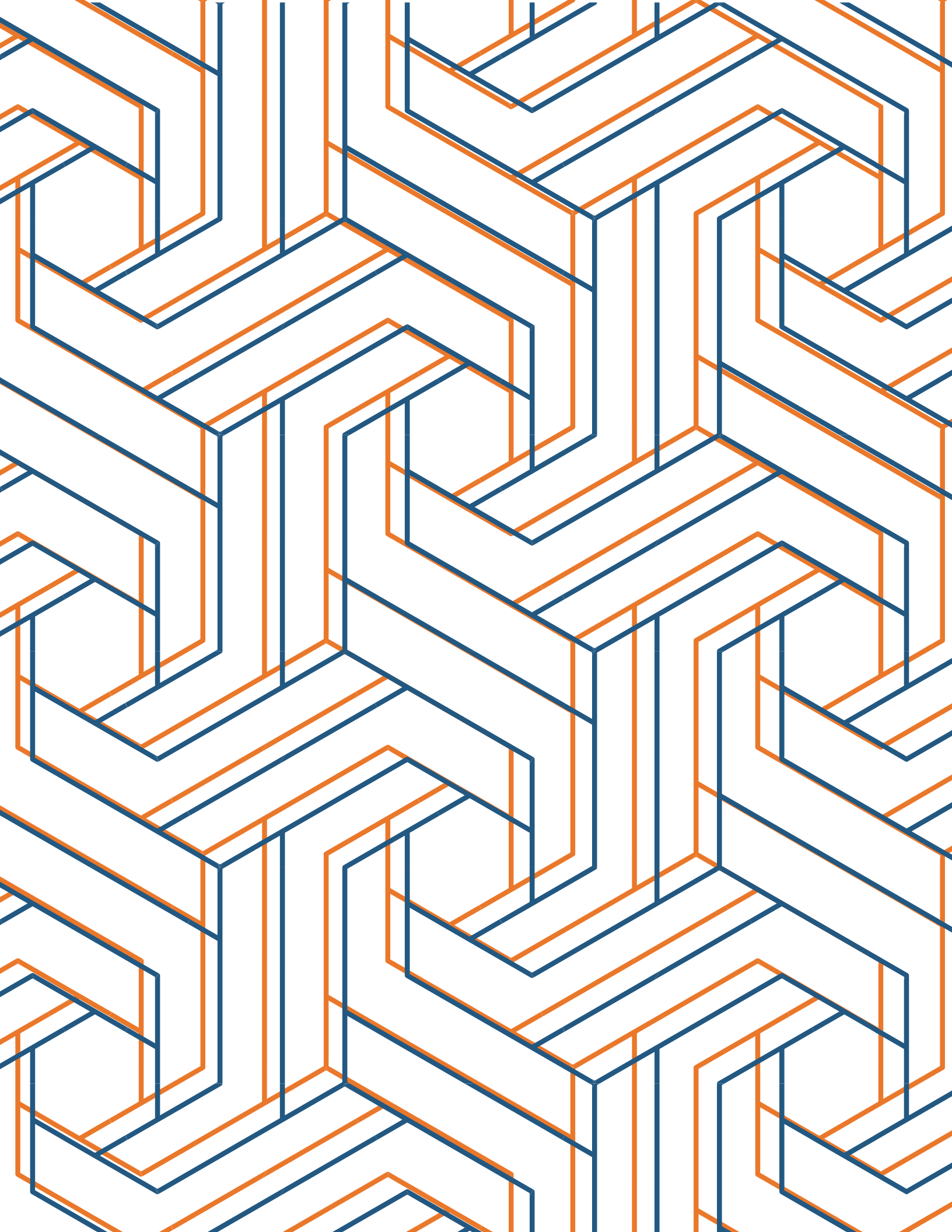
**LATINO**  
POLICY INSTITUTE

Research | Advocacy | Education

# ANNUAL REPORT

20

22



# Message From Our Director

As an organization, LPI has been proud to support, lead, and respond to the evolving experiences and needs of Latinos for over seventeen years. However, one of the main lessons we took from the work and success of 2022 is that collective action and voice are one of the most powerful things our community has. This year represented the culmination of work and advocacy that began over a decade ago. ***This year, we witnessed how community perseverance and strength can achieve impactful change.***

One of our main goals in 2022 was to dive deeper into some of the issues that Latinos in Rhode Island face regardless of zip code, language, age, or legal status. This led us to an opportunity to connect, learn, and share with organizations representing various issues and communities throughout our state. By better understanding the complexity of our Latino community's problems, LPI will be better positioned to continue its work and mission.

In 2023, we will continue pushing boundaries, advocating for systemic changes and investments, and elevating the critical stories of our beautiful Latino community in Rhode Island.



*Marcela Betancur*  
*Executive Director*



# Mission Vision Future

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*The Latino Policy Institute stimulates public policy discourse by objectively examining and communicating the evolving Latino experiences in Rhode Island.*

*LPI's work transforms the structural and systemic conditions that prevent the Latino community from achieving social, political, and economic equity.*

Over the last three years, LPI has focused on areas demonstrating the evolution and overlapping nature of social issues within the Latino community in Rhode Island and nationwide, such as education, health, and economic equity.



As we look ahead into the next chapter of LPI, we are excited and proud to reflect on the impact, partnerships, and leadership opportunities the organization has had over the last seventeen years.



*The 2022 legislative session was among the most impactful for LPI in the last few years. This year, the General Assembly and the Governor approved legislation that impacts health, economic equity, and civic engagement. LPI is proud to have worked closely with lawmakers, coalitions, and community members to get essential investments and policies to the finish line.*

*The following legislative victories address the daily needs, barriers, and gaps created by systemic inequities impacting marginalized Rhode Islanders.*

### **Cover All Kids**

For two years in a row, LPI, in coalition with RI KIDS Count, Progreso Latino, and the Economic Progress Institute, advocated for the passage of Cover All Kids legislation.

This critical legislation provides health insurance coverage to children who are not eligible for Rite Care due to their immigration status. The coalition launched its advocacy efforts ahead of the 2022 Legislative Session by drafting a letter to Governor McKee urging him to include “Cover All Kids” funding in his 2023 budget proposal, thereby increasing the likelihood that the legislation would pass.



After two years of organizing parents, healthcare professionals, and policymakers, in June 2022, Cover All Kids was officially signed into law, granting healthcare access to hundreds of uninsured children in our state.



## Safe Roads Act



For over thirteen years, LPI has advocated with our partners for legislation allowing the state to issue driving privilege cards and operating privilege permits to undocumented applicants, better known as the Safe Roads Act or Licenses for All. A path to success was difficult to envision when we began this journey.



During the 2022 legislative session, LPI and Progreso Latino worked with residents to collect personal testimony written in various languages to submit during the Senate and House hearings. In late Spring, the bill once again overwhelmingly passed the Senate. In addition, after a long and sometimes tense legislative session, the Safe Roads Act passed the House of Representatives with bipartisan support on the last day of the session.

## Let RI Vote



During the 2020 election, COVID-19 emergency measures temporarily expanded voting access for voting early and by mail, resulting in record voter turnout. As a result, the RI Voting Access Coalition created a campaign in 2021 known as the Let RI Vote Campaign to broaden and codify these measures. LPI joined over 30 organizations as a member of this coalition, and our Director, Marcela Betancur, served as the spokesperson for the coalition.

The passage of Let RI Vote successfully provides more modern and accessible elections to voters by expanding access to mail ballots and early voting. This important legislation will have an enormous impact on Rhode Island voters for years to come.



# PARTNERSHIP

*The work and success of LPI are possible thanks to our many partners across the government, nonprofit and private sectors. In addition, we are grateful to our partners, coalition allies, lawmakers, and community members for their fearless and persistent advocacy for a better Rhode Island.*

## **In 2022:**

**5**

LPI was part of **five coalitions** that successfully passed important legislation related to issues of children and families, immigration, civic engagement, and education.

**60**

LPI worked with **over sixty organizations** across sectors to engage, advocate and educate Rhode Islanders.

**8**

LPI co-hosted **eight events** and discussions with partners to better connect with and inform key stakeholders, as well as the wider community.

## *Partnership Highlight*

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### **Latinos & Mental Health**



Since 2019, health has been one of LPI's main priority issues. Additionally, the impacts of the ongoing pandemic exacerbated the need and importance of highlighting the gaps and inequities among Latinos in health access, specifically mental and behavioral health.

LPI found that one of the significant hurdles Latinos and other multilingual and multiracial community members faced was the lack of access to professionals with shared identities and/or spoken languages. Therefore, in 2022, LPI partnered with Blue Cross Blue Shield of Rhode Island and the Latino Mental Health Network of Rhode Island to implement the **Latinos & Mental Health Project**. The project will examine the existing gaps and propose improvements and investments to Rhode Island's mental health workforce pipeline.

*The Latino Policy Institute is proud to lead meaningful conversations and provide an informed analysis of the Latino community to influence decisions and policymaking. As an organization, we pride ourselves in being able to do this work because it connects to the lived and professional experiences of our team and supporters. LPI is proud to continue working towards a better life for Latinos and all Rhode Islanders.*

### **Latino Leaders Luncheon**

On September 16, 2022, the Latino Leaders Network celebrated its *66th Latino Leaders Luncheon Series* in Providence, Rhode Island. During the event, Arturo Vargas, CEO of the National Association of Latino Elected and Appointed Officials (NALEO), was awarded for his work and dedication to the Latino community. Additionally, the Latino Policy Institute was the highlighted Community Partner for our extensive commitment and success in elevating the meaningful impacts of Latinos in Rhode Island.



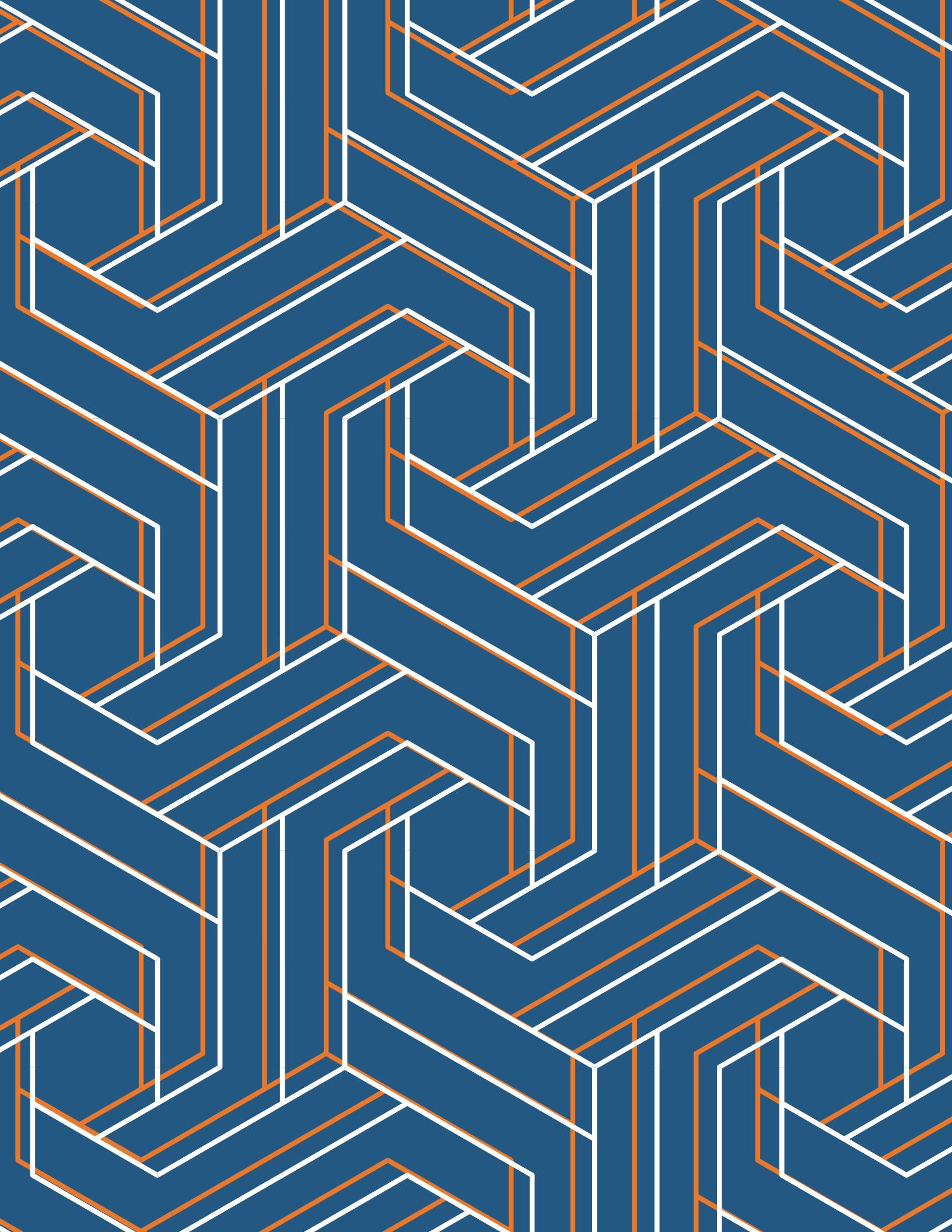
### **Rhode Island Life Index**

In 2022, the Latino Policy Institute joined the RI Life Index Coalition; the Index is a partnership between Blue Cross & Blue Shield of RI and the Brown University School of Public Health. In November, our Director participated in releasing the 4th annual Index report as part of the community panel to make clear how the released data connects with our policy work, priorities, and visions for the future.



**LEADERSHIP**





**Our work is possible through the generous support  
of our partners, stakeholders, and community.  
Thank you to all who supported us in 2022!**

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