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WE-Zine



PROGRESS, DELIVERED TO YOUR INBOX



Dear %%FirstName%%,

As the daughter of an immigrant, I've always been deeply inspired by my mother's long-held dream of starting her own business. Despite her passion and ambition, she often felt unable to pursue that dream due to a lack of resources and the fear of failure. Witnessing her struggle ignited a desire in me to help other women overcome similar barriers and achieve their entrepreneurial aspirations. But my mother's journey is not just her own; it reflects the experiences of countless women who have navigated a landscape that hasn't always welcomed us.

Historically, Latina/x women have been pioneers in entrepreneurship, from small family-run businesses to influential modern startups. Visionaries like María Elena Salinas paved the way, proving that our voices and visions matter. Over the decades, we've seen a remarkable shift as more Latina/x women embrace their entrepreneurial spirit, driven by resilience and the desire to create opportunities for themselves and their communities.

Today, initiatives like the **Women's Entrepreneurship Hub (WE Hub)** are instrumental in helping transform dreams into reality. The WE Hub provides mentorship, access to funding, and vital resources, empowering women like my mother to overcome barriers. Through workshops and training, women gain the confidence and skills needed to thrive, turning their fears into stepping stones toward their own vision of success.

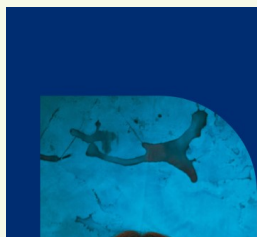
We also have Business Service Organizations like **Mujeres Latinas en Acción**, **The Office of Economic Equity and Empowerment**, **Foundation of Little Village**, and **Small Business Majority**, whose jobs aren't to just review and revise business plans and financial statements, but to open doors for our community. To create endless opportunities for generations moving forward. And to be the voice of our parents who have been quiet out of fear and discrimination.

As we look back on Hispanic Heritage Month, which concluded on October 15th, we celebrate and honor the incredible journeys of Latina/x women entrepreneurs who have come before us and those who are just beginning. Hispanic Heritage Month—and every month—is a chance to make a difference. My mother's story is a reminder that while the challenges are significant, together, we can build a future where every woman has the opportunity to thrive. Our community has the potent power and responsibility to create change, and I fully intend on being a part of it.

In Solidarity,

Shelby Flores
Events and Volunteer Manager

"She Says" with Tania Medina



— “*She Says*”

We need advocates on all sides because it takes a



village to uplift everybody. So, I love that Women Employed is creating that space for those hard conversations that otherwise wouldn't be had.

Tania Medina



There's something to be said about the power of being surrounded by women. The nurturing, the care, the resilience, the limitless possibilities, and the gentle push needed when self-doubt and Imposter Syndrome try to tell you what you can't do. Tania Medina can attest to all of the above. Not only is she the product of what happens when the women in your life breathe and speak life into you, but she has positioned herself to do the same. In her professional life, at the Boys and Girls Club of North Central Illinois, she nurtures kids in grades K through 12 by creating special initiatives and programs, but she also helps to enhance women's confidence and capture precious family moments with her photography business, [Tania Media Photography](#). And, thanks to the [Women's Entrepreneurship Hub \(WE Hub\)](#), Tania has been able to seek the resources needed to better run her business, get her questions answered, and realize that her success does not have to look like everyone else's.

In this month's ["She Says,"](#) Tania Medina shares with us what it means to follow in her parents' entrepreneurial footsteps, how she Centers Women's Voices in her work, and her advice for aspiring entrepreneurs.

[Read More](#)

Your Voice is Crucial. Vote!

VOTE
BE THE CHANGE YOU
WANT TO SEE IN
THE WORLD.

Register to vote today!

Women Employed
WE pursue equity for all.

The graphic features a woman in a white shirt and blue pants walking towards a ballot box, holding a ballot. The background is green.

Election Day is less than one week away. This is a critical election year, and the issues that matter to working women, our families, and our communities are at stake at every level—local, state, and national.

If you haven't already, make your plan to vote today! Here are some upcoming dates you need to know.

National:

- Early voting, mail-in deadlines, and other important dates vary by state. In most states, mail-in ballots must be received on or before **November 5th**. Check the website for your state board of elections for details.
- **November 5th: ELECTION DAY.** [Find your polling place.](#)

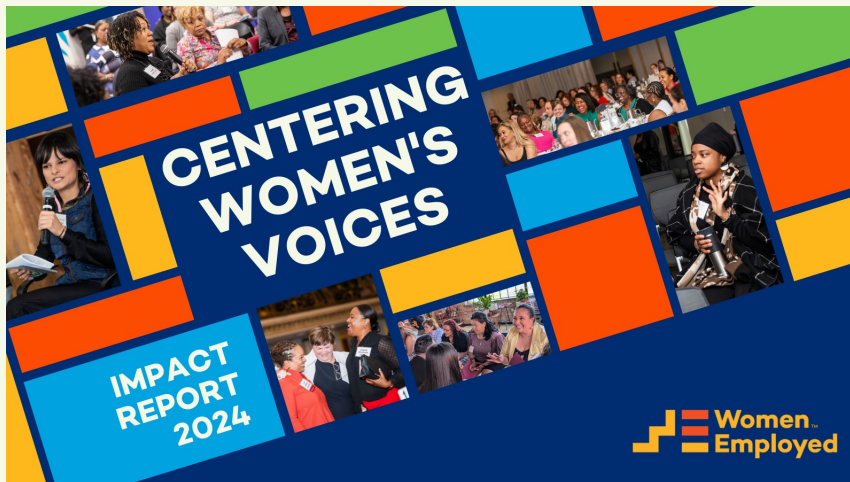
In Illinois:

- **TODAY, October 31st:** Deadline to [request a mail-in or absentee ballot](#). (Requests must be received by today. You can apply online.)
- **November 4th:** Last day to vote early in Illinois. [Find your early voting location.](#)
- **November 5th: ELECTION DAY.** In-person voting only. Polls open at 6:00 a.m. and close at 7:00 p.m. [Find your polling place.](#)
 - Last day for grace period registration at designated locations. [Find a location.](#)
 - Mail-in ballots must be postmarked by this date, or returned in person to a drop box by 7:00 p.m. [Find a drop box location.](#)
- **November 19th:** Last day for mail-in ballots to be received. (They must be postmarked on or before **November 5th**.)

[Check out our 2024 Voter Mobilization Toolkit](#) for more important news you can use to help you make your plan to vote. We've even got a digital outreach toolkit with sample posts and images so you can share the information on social media!

Your vote is your voice! Get out there and make yourself heard.

The 2024 Impact Report is Here!



As we reflect on our last fiscal year, we are encouraged by the incredible strides we have made in building the economic power of women, their families, and communities. Those victories include securing expanded paid leave in the City of Chicago, expanding our ASPIRE Project to help more Illinois students succeed in higher education, convening the Women's Economic Power Agenda (WEPA) Summit, and so much more. The secret to our success is that we listen, and we unapologetically center the needs of working women.

In this year's [Impact Report](#), we are **Centering Women's Voices**, and giving them the space to share their own stories and experiences in their own words. Their needs are both valid and valued, and we are working hard to remove the barriers that stand between them, the opportunities they seek, and their ability to thrive. Through the experiences of these women, you can better visualize the importance and the impact of our work.

[Read our 2024 Impact Report](#)

Thank you for your ongoing support as we continue to put the needs of working women first.

Latina Equal Pay Day

When looking at all earners,
Latina/x women earn just
51 cents for every \$1 dollar
earned by men.

#LATINAWOMENSEQUALPAYDAY

Source: Equal Pay Today, 2024



October 3rd was Latina Equal Pay Day, a day to raise awareness about the Wage Gap for Latina/x women workers and to take action for Trabajadoras everywhere!

Latina/x women are among the fastest-growing, most influential groups in the U.S., excelling in every sector and industry in our country. However, Latina/x women continue to face a pay gap, earning, on average, only 51¢ for every \$1 dollar paid to white, non-Hispanic men. And this wage gap cannot be explained away by education, experience, or perceived choices—it's gender and racial discrimination. Even in states with large populations of Latina/x women in the workforce, rampant wage disparities persist, with devastating consequences for Latina/x women and their families.

On Latina Equal Pay Day, the Equal Pay Chicago Coalition hosted a Latina Equal Pay Day webinar, *Research → Action → Impact: Leveraging Data to Close the Wage Gap for Latinas*. Speakers included:

- **Starr De Los Santos**, Associate Director of Coalitions, Women Employed
- **Martha Susana Jaimes**, Senior Research Economist, Institute for Women's Policy Research
- **Izzy Dobbel**, Policy Director, Chicago Federation of Labor
- **Linda Xóchitl Tortolero**, President & CEO, Mujeres Latinas en Acción

Research → Action → Impact: Leveraging Data to
Close the Wage Gap for Latinas



WATCH THE RECORDING: equalpaychicago.org/events

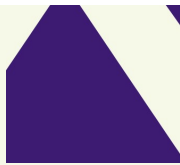


The webinar explored key research conducted by the Institute for Women's Policy Research (IWPR) and discussed how this data can be utilized to close the wage gap, not only for Latina/x women but for all women and non-binary individuals. To learn more and watch the recording, visit: <https://equalpaychicago.org/events>.

Domestic Violence Awareness Month



DOMESTIC
VIOLENCE
AWARENESS
MONTH



October is Domestic Violence Awareness, and WE is committed to supporting the economic strength and independence of survivors in Chicago and Illinois.

Although people of all socio-economic groups experience domestic violence (DV), 40 percent of Illinois survivors can be classified as having a low socio-economic status. And 99 percent of domestic violence survivors are subjected to economic abuse, making it extremely difficult for survivors to chart a path to safety and healing.

WE's work—from original research like that in our ***Intersecting Barriers* report**, to our innovative Career Foundations pilot project with DV organizations and workforce development providers, to our advocacy for policies like **paid time off** that protect survivors' employment security—recognizes the inextricable links between economic justice and freedom from violence. We salute the courage and resourcefulness of survivors, and the life-saving work of our partners in the domestic violence services community.

Read our *Intersecting Barriers* report here:
<https://bit.ly/4f9apTS>

Learn more about paid leave rights in Illinois and Chicago here:
sicktimeil.org and sicktimechicago.org

World Menopause Day



They Said

Retired IT Professional, 64

The same way we treat expectant mothers should be the same way we treat women who are going through menopause and even having their menstrual cycles. That would help to educate women of all ages about what menopause is and remove some of the shame and secrecy that surrounds it.



World Menopause Day is recognized every year, on October 18th. The day serves as an opportunity to raise awareness about menopause and share resources individuals may need to better support their health and well-being.

Last month, **WE featured** women of varying ages, backgrounds, and careers on their experiences with menopause and how it has impacted their work. From the unsupported to the supported, we shared when they realized they were experiencing menopause, how their jobs accommodated them (or didn't), and what women can do to advocate for themselves.

[Read More](#)

Join Our Next SHESolidarity Event!

Join us for our SHESolidarity Event!

Friday, November 8, 2024 | 10:00am-1:00pm
CARE Center, 230 N. Kolmar Ave
Chicago, IL 60624

RSVP by Wednesday, November 6, 2024

Women Entrepreneurs are better together!



Calling all women entrepreneurs and mompreneurs! [Join us for our upcoming SHESolidarity event on Wednesday, November 6th.](#) In partnership with Hustle Mommies, we invite you to attend our thoughtfully curated space designed to encourage collaboration through group activities, networking opportunities, and connection with various business service organizations to share information, tools, and resources for growing your business.

What to Expect:

- **Empowerment:** Gain inspiration and insights from successful entrepreneurs who have walked the same path.
- **Connection:** Have meaningful connections with like-minded women who understand your journey and can offer support and guidance.
- **Support:** Access information, tools, and resources from business service organizations to help you achieve your own vision of success as an entrepreneur.

Tickets for this event are FREE, but registration is required. **Please RSVP by November 6th:** <https://bit.ly/SHESolidarity>

SHESolidarity centers Black and Latina/x women and is a space for women entrepreneurs and mompreneurs to come together, creating a supportive environment to connect, learn, and build their business community.

Together, let us cultivate a community of resilience and strength, where we stand in solidarity to uplift and empower one another!

[Register Today](#)

Join Our Team!





Want to work for an employer named one of Crain's 100 Best Places to Work two years running? Passionate about making the world better for working women? **Join our team!**

Women Employed currently has two openings and are looking for our next **WE Hub Manager** and **Associate Director of People and Culture!** If you are looking for an opportunity to improve the lives of working women through systemic change, then we would love to hear from you!

Visit <https://womenemployed.org/work-with-us/> to check out both of the incredible job opportunities and **apply today!**

Save The Date!

THE WORKING LUNCH

Save the Date!

Thursday, May 22, 2025

Hilton Chicago
720 S. Michigan Ave



Mark your calendars for The Working Lunch 2025! Our signature fundraising event will take place on Thursday, May 22nd and bring together nearly 1,000 activists, community partners, and prominent leaders in philanthropy, business, media, and politics, all in support of increasing the economic status of women and removing barriers to economic equity.

Thursday, May 22, 2025
11:00 a.m. - 1:30 p.m. CT
The Hilton Chicago, 720 S. Michigan Avenue

Registration opens in early 2025 and you'll be the first to hear when it does, so stay tuned!

Sponsorship opportunities are available. Contact Michelle Schwartz at mschwartz@womenemployed.org, to learn more!

Hope to see you there!

Where in the World is Women Employed?



Where in the World is



You know what’s Scary? An inequitable world where women aren’t given the resources, support, or opportunities needed to thrive. So, what do WE do about it? We show up on panel discussions about addressing systemic barriers, speak at conferences on gender equity, present on how the broader entrepreneurship ecosystem can better support Women of Color business owners, discuss the necessity for financial support and agency for survivors of domestic violence, explore how to close the opportunity gap for Black students in higher education, and much more. And we did ALL of that, just in the last month!

But while we’re hitting the ground running, pursuing equity for all, we also make time to practice self-care (with some help from the American Dance Therapy Association), celebrate the rich history of Chicago’s Latin community, acknowledge some of our most steadfast supporters, and spend time connecting with our Board of Directors. We even found time to travel to our nation’s capital to attend a gala filled with moving testimonials, fireside chats, and a reminder to, “Find joy amidst the struggle.”

We do all of this to ensure that we leave this world better than how we inherited it. Want to learn more about where we’ve been? [Check out our monthly recap.](#) And be sure to read all the way to the end to learn about where we’re going next.

[Read More](#)

WE In The News

[Latina Equal Pay Day](#)

WGN Radio 720

What We're Reading

[Age Discrimination Against Workers Age 50-Plus Persists](#)

AARP

[More Black and Latina women are leading unions — and transforming how they work](#)

Associated Press

[People with Disabilities Benefit from Rise of Remote Work](#)

Center for Retirement Research

[Black Women’s Experiences Financing Their College Education](#)

The Century Foundation

[Return-to-Office Mandates and the Future of Work](#)

Great Place to Work

[We Shall Not Be Moved](#)

The Leadership Conference on Civil and Human Rights



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