In this time of coronavirus, a message from Angelica Salas

Saludos,
I want to take a moment to address the fast-spreading COVID-19/coronavirus crisis and talk to you about how CHIRLA is responding, as an organization and as part of the larger immigrant community.

Like many of you, we are staying informed of the latest news and developments regarding the virus that include a growing list of sick community members, school closures and shelter-in-place notices.

It’s a lot to take in. We are all having to turn on a dime to adjust to this new reality.

We also know that in any crisis, much less a world pandemic, immigrants and people of color tend to bear unjust attacks. All this, even as they receive the fewest benefits and medical treatment to survive the problem.

Our community, for example, does not get a trillion-dollar bailout—they get blamed. They don’t get to work at home—they have to make do with lost hourly income. They don’t get health benefits—but they clean up after office workers who do.

That’s why I tell you today that in this crisis, we stand and fight with our community. We are providing limited services for as long as we can while rigorously abiding by state, local and national directives. We are answering your questions by phone, on social media, and via our immigrant assistance line.

We will stand with our Asian brothers and sisters who are targets of xenophobic onslaughts and even hate crimes. And we will join key partners to call on the federal, state, and local governments for up-to-date information, protections, resources, direct assistance, and other ways to keep our community informed, cared for, and empowered.
Some key issues we are asking the government to address during this health crisis include: full access to healthcare for all; no penalties to workers for taking care of their health or that of a loved one; and an immediate stop to all immigration enforcement and detention.

We have readied our community education team with referral information, so if you need information, are not sure what to do, or feel sick, we encourage you to call the CHIRLA immigrant assistance line: 888-624-4752. Depending on your question, we will refer you to a trusted network of partners.

We invite you to visit the websites for Los Angeles County of Public Health or the Centers for Disease Control (CDC), where you will find up-to-date facts about coronavirus.

One more thing. If you or anyone you know has been the target of a hate incident, whether because of this crisis or anything else, be a good witness: videotape if possible, note license plate numbers, write down details. Then report it to the authorities or to us. If you are a victim of such an attack, report it to the authorities. This health emergency is not an excuse to victimize anyone.

If you want to keep our referral services going with a donation, please click here. Your donation will help steer our services to the community during these difficult times.

This is not the first crisis our community has faced. This administration’s constant attacks have made us resilient, so we are well-prepared for any adversity. Thank you for continuing to help us rise to the challenge, as we have for the past 34 years.

Our secret weapon has always been our solidarity, and once again it will help us thrive together.

Yours in solidarity,