



## CASA ALBA MELANIE

314 S. Madison Street | Green Bay, WI 54301

Phone: (920) 445-0104 | Web: [casaalba.org](http://casaalba.org)

**Hispanic Resource Center of Greater Green Bay**

Monday through Friday: 10 AM to 4 PM

*Casa ALBA Melanie has served the needs of Hispanic families in the greater Green Bay area since 2011.*

## WHAT'S GOING AND GROWING AT CASA ALBA MELANIE

### PROGRAMS & ACTIVITIES

Casa ALBA offers many Programs and Activities that further our mission: to nurture the well-being and wholesome development of all members of the Hispanic community living in the greater Green Bay area. The activities that we provide include the following:

**Educational Services:** Spanish GED, Tutoring, Early Childhood Education, Spanish for Professionals, Diabetes Education, Drivers education, Promote higher education for all

**Professional Services:** Immigration Attorney, District Attorney, DACA Support, Residency Renewal, Citizenship Application, Document Assistance, Insurance Counselling, Women's Support Group, Referral to appropriate community services

#### Community Liaison and Advocate:

Safe site for crime victims, Police Liaison, Mobile Mexican Consulate, Advocacy for the Hispanic community, Educate community on cultural diversity

#### Socialization and Family Needs:

A friendly, non-threatening environment to share ideas and talents, Senior Citizens Group, Youth Sports Training, Strong Women's Group, Sewing classes, Support families with special needs

**General Services:** Document Translation, Notary Public, Pastoral Services, Agency Referrals, Medical Dental Referrals, Financial Consulting, Employment Referrals, Housing Advocacy, Energy Assistance and Phone Consultations.

### COVID-19 AND WALK-IN TRAFFIC

Due to COVID-19 pandemic, the State issued a "Safer-at-Home" order on March 24. The "Safe-at-Home" order was extended until May 26. In anticipation of the "Safer-at-Home" order, we closed the Center to walk-in traffic on March 18, 2020.

During this phase of the pandemic, our team made a variety of adjustments. Our goal is to serve our clients while remaining flexible for the safety of everyone. All in-person meetings and classes shifted to virtual connections, phone calls, or have been put on hold.

However, information, referral and assistance services have not only continued, but have geared up. Spanish GED and Escuelita have shifted to internet classes so that they could continue learning. Escuelita did break for the summer but plans are being discussed for the next step for bringing families together.

Medical experts seem to concede that we should not expect a COVID-19 vaccine for 12 to 18 months, given testing protocols. We continue to "adjust" our critical services in the interim, while safeguarding the health and safety of both our clients and staff.

### COVID-19 GRANTS & FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE

While assisting people with financial aid has not been a service of our center in the past, the dire impact of the pandemic on the people we serve, as well as the amazing goodness of agencies and private donors has made it possible for us to provide some help with payment of rent, utilities and some other basic concerns.

Thanks to Emergency grants given us from Brown County United Way, the Green Bay Packers Give Back Fund, Greater Green Bay Community Foundation, as well as donations from caring individuals throughout the community, we have been able to give people a sense of hope when jobs were lost, family members became ill, no access to financial resources were available to many. As of early July, Casa ALBA has been able to assist 140 households with paid bills amounting to approximately \$48,000.

### CALL VOLUMES SPIKE

While our office was closed to walk-in traffic, our call volumes spiked. For the month of May, our annual phone call rate increased from a pace of 7,200 calls per year to a pace of 26,331 calls per year, or a 365% call volume increase.

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### COVID-19 TESTING SITE

We would like to thank our health care professionals and the WI National Guard for their COVID-19 testing in the Casa ALBA parking lot, during the height of the pandemic. On the last day of the testing site, **Luis Sanchez, Pilar Campos, and Maria Plascencia** prepared a meal for all the workers that supported the site. We had prepared 40 meals with 3 tacos each. We later found out that workers from the Resch Center site also stopped by for the food. The event was a total success. The workers were so delighted ... "the best tacos ever". The workers provided a sign in colored letters, saying: "Thank you". A job well done. We are so proud of all of you!

### IMMIGRATION & DACA

Assistance with DACA renewals and applications for residency and citizenship continue. The recent Supreme Court DACA ruling has created a swell of hope for hundreds of youth who would qualify but for whom the application process was terminated. We continue to advocate for a positive outcome for the hopes that so many young persons that seek to live life with confidence.

### TEAMWORK

Casa ALBA has worked closely with many other local service providers during these "life is different" times. St. Willebrord and St Philip Church team members helped interview and provide resources for families facing crisis situations. We collaborated with our local healthcare systems and offered our building for the Covid-19 testing during April and May. We shared information from local hospitals in our area. We still get calls asking if "we" are still providing testing. We have learned all the local testing sites and often share their phone numbers. We collaborate with Achieve Brown County on the educational challenges that Hispanic families are facing because of lack of internet access and/or computers. The administrator of the village of Bellevue, where many Hispanics live, is working to find funding to provide better internet access for families. We are working with the GBAPS and Connections for Mental Wellness, preparing videos for parents to help them when they or their children are dealing with stresses that cause anxiety or depression. Our senior citizens, who have been so accustomed to meeting in person weekly have had to resort to phone calls to keep up their spirits. Elizabeth Kostichka applied for a grant that would allow for the purchase of tablets for the seniors and she is currently gathering Latino youth who might be available to teach each senior how to use the tablets so that they can begin to communicate via Zoom.

### OFFICE REOPENING

Our office reopened to walk-in traffic on July 6. Prior to reopening the office, we did a thorough review of CDC guidelines and best practices to safeguard the health and safety of both clients and staff. We bought personal protective equipment (PPE), signage, and cleaning supplies needed to safely reopen the facility. We purchased a WebEx licenses and a Facebook Portal+ hardware so that more of our work could be completed in virtual meetings. An unexpected cost was that furnaces in the building needed to be replaced due to crack heat exchangers.

### WEB ACTIVITY SURGES

Our website, [casaalba.org](http://casaalba.org), saw a surge of activity during the pandemic. Web visits and page views were up 200% to 250% from our all-time highs. We were asked by the **Green Bay Press Gazette** to share content with the Hispanic population as the greater Green Bay community was hit particularly hard by COVID-19. The Press Gazette shared proprietary content for a dedicated page. Our website incorporates Google translate, so all posted content can be translated into 109 different languages. The Coronavirus page quickly became our most visited page. We also experienced a surge in our Facebook page posts as the community sought to share and provide guidance to the Hispanic community on how to avoid contacting and dealing with the disease.

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