

Sin Barreras: Breaking Barriers and Empowering Hispanic Immigrants

by **Chayla Rowley**

The Hispanic community in central Virginia faces unique challenges, especially those who have recently fled life-threatening situations in their native countries. Starting over in a new culture can be extraordinarily difficult, which is why Sin Barreras was founded in Charlottesville, VA in 2012. The organization aims to support immigrants and their families in central Virginia, particularly the Hispanic population. Sin Barreras does this through education, advocacy, and meeting their needs. To meet the increasing demand for its services from Waynesboro residents, Sin Barreras opened a satellite office there in November 2021. Both offices aim to create a space for the immigrant population to integrate and prosper in their environments.

LAST YEAR, SIN BARRERAS RESPONDED TO OVER

6300
SERVICE REQUESTS



You're Invited!



Open House | Fri, April 26, 11:30 am-1:30 pm & 4:30-6:30 pm | Sin Barreras ([RSVP](#))

- ▶ **Volunteer Recruitment Fair** | Tues, April 23, 3-6 pm | The Center at Belvedere
- ▶ **Hike & Picnic** | Sat, April 27, 10am | Springs Valley Park in Crozet ([RSVP](#))
- ▶ **Cinco de Mayo Celebration** | Sun, May 5, 4-7 pm at PVCC's V. Earl Dickinson theater parking lot

These are representative cases (client names changed to maintain confidentiality.)

“I am so very grateful to all the people that work at Sin Barreras. I hope God blesses their lives and all those who work with them. Infinite thanks!”

Despite being a long-time resident with documented status, Jorge was overwhelmed contemplating the long and difficult process required to get U.S. citizenship. Sin Barreras volunteers helped him on two fronts, pairing him with an accredited Board of Immigration Appeals Representative who helped get his paperwork in order and a tutor who spent many weeks reviewing the citizenship exam's subject matter with him.

“I am a Health Promoter, and the technical skills Sin Barreras is teaching me are helping me serve the community even better!”

One such case involved Esperanza and her young son who were forced to flee their native Honduran village, leaving behind their family, friends, and possessions to escape threats from a criminal gang that had murdered Esperanza's father. Without money, English language skills, or legal guidance, they could not independently navigate the U.S. immigration system. Sin Barreras staff and volunteers assisted the woman in obtaining the necessary immigration services.

“[Before connecting with Sin Barreras] I didn't know where to start! [Now] I passed the exam and swore the oath of allegiance; I'm a citizen now!”

Alegría enrolled in Sin Barrera's computer literacy program to advance her skills. Caring instructors who teach in Spanish and a peer group of fellow immigrants made Sin Barreras classes a comfortable space for her. The organization's intimate knowledge of the Hispanic immigrant community allows it to tailor its classes uniquely to be maximally accessible to them. These are huge factors that increase students' success rate in the class.

Some may know Sin Barreras best for organizing the Cville Sabroso cultural festival each September for the past 11 years. In 2023, over 4500 attendees enjoyed vibrant music, dancing, and native costuming from ten different countries and sampled various Hispanic cuisines. This premier event, made possible by Sin Barreras's many community partnerships and dedicated donors and volunteers, is one of Charlottesville's biggest family-friendly parties of the year!

SAVE THE DATE FOR THE CVILLE SABROSO AT BOOKER T. WASHINGTON PARK ON SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 21, 2024!



2023 CVILLE SABROSO

4500 ATTENDEES

SUPPORT THIS WORK

A handful of staffers and over 200 passionate volunteers put client relationships at the heart of the life-changing assistance they provide. Sin Barreras offers hope and a pipeline to success for immigrants to become full participants and contributors in our community. Volunteer time and donations help turn client aspirations into success story realities. However, the demand for its services is high, and Sin Barreras struggles to meet all of the requests it receives. There's an urgent need for more volunteers to help with this work and even more for programmatic and operational funding.

HERE'S HOW YOU CAN HELP TODAY

DONATE

Donations to Sin Barreras will help empower the Hispanic community in Central Virginia. Funds will create opportunities and offset the costs of educational program materials like laptops, citizenship study booklets, and so much more! They also welcome donations of time in the form of lesson planners, bilingual instructors, tutors, etc.

TOGETHER WE CAN UPLIFT A COMMUNITY

SUBSCRIBE | VOLUNTEER | LEARN
| ENGAGE | FOLLOW | DONATE



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