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**Documentary Series Set to Launch This Fall Amplifies Salient Housing Access Issues
Affecting Latino/a/x Essential Workers in Oregon**

[Trailer](#)

Casa y Comunidad is the first-of-its-kind multi-sited documentary that explores Latino/a/x essential workers' experience with housing access across Oregon. Visit casaycomunidad.org to watch the bilingual web-based docuseries for free. Premieres September 13th, 2023.

Eugene, Oregon [September 13th, 2023]— [*Casa y Comunidad: Latino/a/x Housing in Oregon*](#), a groundbreaking oral history-based documentary series, highlights the housing needs, challenges, and successes of the Latino/a/x essential workers who provide the most, yet who have access to the least. They include Latino/a/x workers in agriculture, forestry, viticulture, maritime industries, food processing, and service sectors. According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics, essential workers represent about 34% to 43% of the U.S. workforce. In Oregon, these circumstances are especially precarious for Latino/a/x immigrants from Mexico and Central America because they remain in precarious positions through either undocumented status or on migrant-labor visas.

In early 2022, Professor John Arroyo, Ph.D., AICP set out to make *Casa y Comunidad* a reality as the recipient of a [Whiting Foundation Public Engagement Fellowship](#) as well as his work as Founding Director of the [Mellon Foundation-funded Pacific Northwest Just Futures Institute for Racial and Climate Justice](#). “Similar to other predominantly rural states, Oregon remains a new immigrant gateway, a place where the outcome of rapid racial and ethnic demographic shifts often leads to disproportionate public and private resources to newcomers,” said Dr. Arroyo. “As a planner, Latino/a/x studies scholar, and national expert on Latino/a/x housing issues, it is clear that the current and enduring debates about the provision of fair, affordable, and dignified housing in Oregon do not always include the perspectives of those most affected. Capturing this through the public humanities – a bi-lingual docuseries – was an intentional way of showcasing these stories across multiple generations.”

Apart from serving as a tool for policymakers in the housing arena, *Casa y Comunidad* provides the Oregon Department of Education’s 9th-12th educators with a classroom tool that meets the ethnic studies requirements ([HB 2845/HB2023](#)). “As someone who grew up in a family of intergenerational agricultural workers, the docuseries echoes many of the housing experiences my own family encountered from the citrus groves of Orange County and California’s Central

Valley to Medford, Oregon,” said Dr. Arroyo. “Learning from lived experience is a powerful outlet. It is my hope that *Casa y Comunidad* helps 9-12 grade Latino/a/x students across Oregon see themselves in their curriculum or learn about their Latino/a/x communities in their area.”

Each episode features the personal housing history of Latino/a/x immigrants – as told by residents themselves – and contributions from planners, policymakers, and staff at culturally specific serving non-profit organizations.

An all-Latino/a/x/e project team born, raised, and/or based in Oregon assisted with all aspects of filming, sound, post-production, graphic design, coordination, and outreach. Lucero Cortez was a leading force as the Assistant Director, Executive Producer, and Editor for *Casa y Comunidad*. “As the story of our community flexes and changes with land and housing development, hearing the community’s stories right from the source could not be more important or timely,” Cortez said. “I grew up in the small migrant town of Woodburn, one of the largest Latinx communities in Oregon. I come from a family of migrant farm workers, and my mother has spent two decades, working as a preschool teacher for migrant children impacted by housing insecurity and social injustice – the same preschool my sister and I attended as children. My life, my work, and my family are all interconnected with the lives and works of the Latinx community around me. It’s been an immense privilege to be let in by the community and trusted to tell their story.”

The crew traveled all throughout Oregon in the summer of 2022 to capture, record, and ultimately make visible the many stories of residents, staff at community organizations, and local elected officials dealing with migrant-related housing issues first-hand.

Episode themes include farmworker housing in Woodburn, rental challenges in Eugene, homeownership in Bend, and fire recovery in the Medford/Phoenix/Talent area. All 9 episodes are set to premiere on [YouTube](#) on **Wednesday, September 13, 2023**, with a full-length feature available in late fall 2023.

Visit casaycomunidad.org to watch the bilingual web-based docuseries for free.