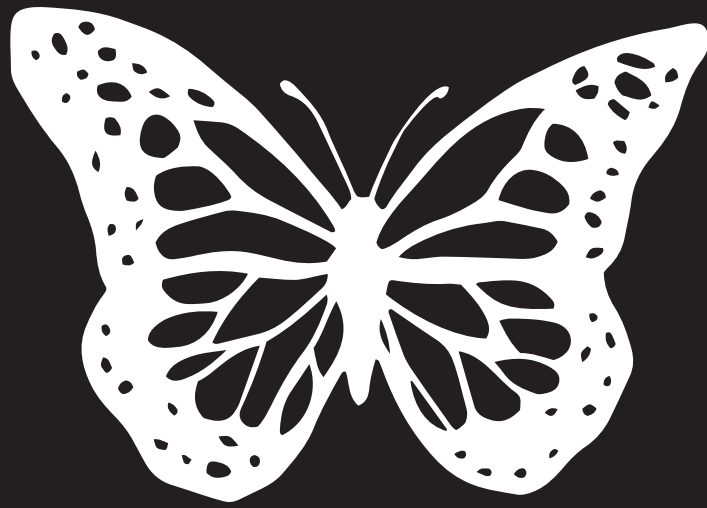


2020-2021 Report



# PA'LANTE

## Restorative Justice



### OUR MISSION

The Pa'lante Restorative Justice Program works to build youth power, center student voice, and organize for policies and practices that dismantle the school to prison pipeline in Holyoke and beyond.

*"Even though I was lonely during the pandemic, Pa'lante made me feel supported and loved and like I could continue with some kind of normalcy, tolerate all the uncertainty, and still fight for justice in my community."*

— Sals Moreno, Pa'lante Peer Leader



## WHAT WE DO

*Student leaders engage in **indigenous circle practice** to support our school community to address conflict and harm, grieve, solve problems, heal from trauma and oppression, as well as to celebrate victories.*

In addition to hosting circles, Pa'lante youth design a **Youth Participatory Action Research (YPAR)** project each year, where they engage in critical action research to address a problem that is relevant to their lived experience at Holyoke High School. For example, this year Pa'lante's student leaders organized to expand and strengthen the Holyoke Public Schools Ethnic Studies Program.

Finally, Pa'lante gets involved in all kinds of other work relevant to our mission, including frequent presentations about our work, hosting community events, and more.



## Creative Connections

We found small ways to maintain Pa'lante's unique sense of family, through things like monthly breakfast or lunch delivery by staff to all peer leaders, home visits, and new birthday celebration traditions. Dean Peer Leaders delivered care packages with fresh baked cookies and to 25 students identified by counselors as needing some extra love during these difficult times.



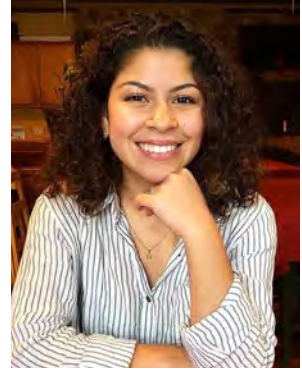
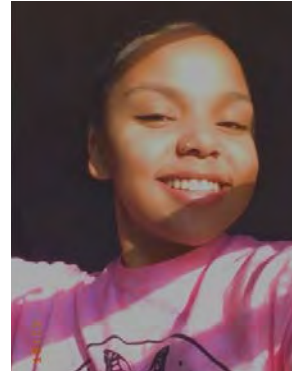
*Pa'lante Alum Neftali Camacho volunteers to help deliver lunch to peer leaders*



*Piles of Pa'lante merch being prepared as part of care packages delivered to students during remote learning*



# 2020-2021 HIGHLIGHTS



## Alumni Takeover

We now have FIVE full-time or nearly full-time alumni staff AND we hired a Pa'lante alum as our Community Advisory Board Coordinator! Alumni staff participated in weekly life coaching as well as trainings in Family Engagement, financial literacy, group facilitation, and more.

Left to Right: Alina '19, Domi '19, Katelynn '19, Sierra '19, TeeJae '18.

**BLM at School:** In early February we hosted our third annual Black Lives Matter at School event in collaboration with Ethnic Studies Holyoke. More than 150 students, educators and organizers attended from across region!

**Pa'lante at the Dean Campus:** We are in the process of expanding to HHS Dean, our district's vocational school.

**Growing and restructuring!** We are moving to a co-Director model and have hired a new Assistant Director for HHS North.

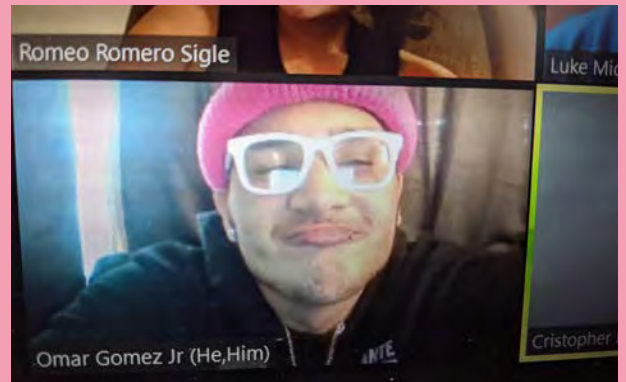
**Pa'lante Squad:** This year, our school introduced a new course for all students to connect and receive support during remote learning. Pa'lante was able to use this block and have all of our Peer Leaders in a class that meets regularly throughout the week. The extra face-time with our Pa'lante fam helped get us through one of the hardest years of learning.

**Ethnic Studies for All!** Pa'lante student leaders focused on increasing access to Ethnic Studies for this year's Youth Participatory Action Research Project! They presented their findings and recommendations to school administrators and community members in early June.

**Supporting Remote Students:** Four of our alum staff specifically focused on providing 1-1 support to students struggling with remote learning.

**Mutual Aid/Financial Support:** We continued to secure grant funds to distribute cash and gift cards to students and families hit hardest by the pandemic.

**Grassroots Fundraising:** We participated in Year One of the Peace Development Fund's Sustainability Project and are now working with a consultant to build our fundraising systems and structures. Our goals are to become more sustainable and less reliant on grants, stay accountable to those most impacted by the school to prison pipeline, and for Pa'lante alumni to lead this work.



*Pa'lante Peer Leaders Zeilen Cora and Josie DeJesus receiving love from staff in the form of food!*

*We made the best of our time on Zoom by taking screenshots of each other making weird faces (consensually, of course!)*



100% of Pa'lante seniors graduated on time, overcoming many obstacles.



## Connect with us!

FB: RJPalante

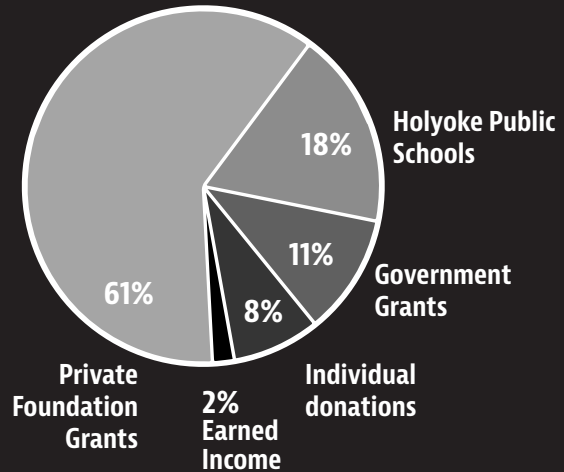
Instagram: Palante\_RJ

info@palanteholyoke.org

www.palanteholyoke.org

## OUR FUNDING

2020-21 Total Budget: \$355,567



### Funders

Burgess Urban Fund, City of Holyoke Mayor's Office, Haymarket People's Fund, Holyoke Public Schools, MA Department of Public Health, Markham Nathan Fund for Social Justice, Mount Pleasant Foundation, Nellie Mae Education Foundation, New England Grassroots Foundation, NoVo Foundation, Peace Development Fund, New Commonwealth Fund, Schott Foundation, Shannon Community Safety Initiative, TKF Spirit Fund, and many individual donors. Our fiscal sponsor is the Transformative Culture Project.

## WHO WE ARE

### Staff

Aleyx Bernard, RJ Coordinator  
 Alina Torres, Alumni Fellow  
 Christopher "Domi" Lora, Senior Alumni Fellow  
 Danielle Hayes, Dean Campus Pa'lante Advisor  
 Evelin Aquino, Assistant Director, HHS North  
 Luke Woodward, Co-Director, HHS North  
 Romeo Romero Sigle, Co-Director, HHS Dean  
 Sierra Stewart, Alumni Fellow  
 TeeJae Reyes, Alumni Fellow

### Community Advisory Board

Katelynn Cruz (CAB Coordinator), Aaron Vega, Alyza Fontanez, Amy Bonilla, Becca Neubardt, Christopher Medina, Dializ Serrano, Iohann Vega, Jazmine Santiago, Jeyleen Troche, Jo Kent Katz, Jonathan Soto, Joseph Krupczynski, Lindsey Laub, Richard Rodriguez, Theresa Cooper Gordon, Yedalis Ruiz.