



WORLD SPEAKS

HELLO

*Hola.*

YO

**Bonjour**

ALOHA

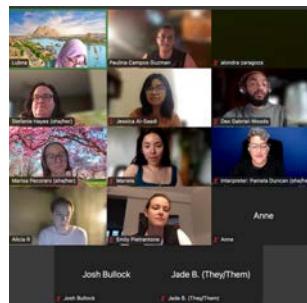
**Ciao**

*Namaste*

Shalom

2025 ANNUAL REPORT





# Reflecting On 2025

In 2025, World Speaks saw a lot of changes. We said goodbye to two staff members, I took leave and welcomed a new little life into my family, we had an Interim Executive Director for the first time, a longtime remote staff member moved to Omaha, and we added two new staff to the team. We are proud to say we served the Omaha community through uncertainty. The organization entered and ended 2025 as a 4 full-time staff team, 22 volunteers, 50+ contractors, and 30 languages that we used to connect the Omaha Community.

We welcomed Paulina to the city, completed our second year of our strategic plan, partnered with the Health Center Association of Nebraska (HCAN) to create a video training, launched our first community interpreters training, had over 100 students, 14 native speaker volunteers for the year, and 480+ contracts completed.

We were awarded two major programs grants to continue the Open Doors program and were able to serve and reach over 18,000 individuals!

**Leah Whitney Chavez**  
Executive Director

# Who Are We?

Mission: To address socio economic gaps and injustices through cultural education, inclusion initiatives, and advocacy services.

Vision: World Speaks envisions a world where every voice is respected, the marginalized are included, & the vulnerable are safe.

## Our Staff

**Paulina Campos  
Guzman**

Programs Manager



**Ivan Lopez**  
Interpretation and  
Linguistic Strategist

**Leah Whitney  
Chavez**

Executive Director  
& Founder

**Amber Coleman**  
Administrative  
Coordinator

**Volunteers: 22**

**Contractors: 51**

## Our Board

President - Jasmine Elmore  
Vice President- Dr. Melanie Bloom  
Treasurer - Krystal Rider  
Secretary - Brian Torpy

Director - Candy Zollicoffer  
Director - Hannah Michelle Bussa  
Director - Anahi Salazar



# Programs

Performed in 24 languages

## **Accessibility**

Interpretation and Translation Services

Open Doors

## **Community**

Community language courses

Tutoring

Justice Speaks

Language Access and Language Justice Training

Interpreters Training

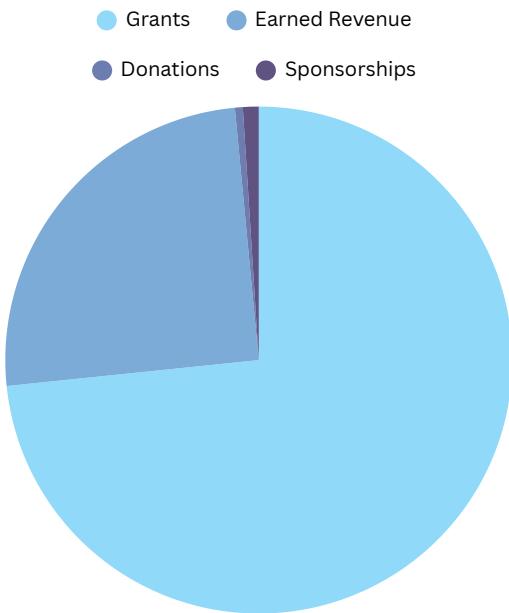
## **The Next Generation**

Tutoring for children

Workshops and School programs (coming soon)



# Budget \$618,051\*



## How We Made A Difference!

- 577+ hours of Interpreting
- 74+ translation projects
- 10 Community Courses
- 16 Community Events
- 2 Cohorts sessions attended
- 4 Conferences attended
- 4 Organizational presentations
- 1 Strategic plan meeting

\* Unaudited number

**During 2025 we  
served  
approximately  
18,000+\*  
individuals**

\*This number represents an estimated combination of individuals directly served and reached via programming

# Highlights Of 2025 Impact

- Launched the Community Interpreters Training program.
- Partnered with over 55 organizations, including but not limited to Nebraska Early Childhood Collaborative, UNO, Firefly, McConaughy Discovery Center, HCAN, Heartland Family Services, Nebraska Department of Education, City of Omaha, Omaha Police Department, Project Houseworks, Together, Westside School District, Omaha Municipal Land Bank, Kiewit Luminarium, Omaha Public Library, Omaha by Design, ENCAP, National Center for Families Learning, Emspace + Lovegren, E Creative, Nebraska Children Homes Society, Inclusive Communities, Samuel Bak Museum, CIRA, Omaha Community Foundation, Live on Nebraska, CHI, The Rose Theater, The Joslyn, and more.
- Hosted our second Language Access Week, made the first mayoral language access proclamation with the former mayor of Omaha, connected with 4 cities in greater Nebraska, hosted a cooking event in Spanish, and reached over 20,000 individuals with our messaging of language accessibility, and cultural awareness.
- Word Speaks Spoke at the NATI conference, facilitated a webinar dedicated to engaging with multilingual learners for the NYC Public Library, and had the opportunity to present at the Leadership Omaha Inclusivity Seminar.
- Over 90 engagements with our tutoring students, 95+ engagements with community course students, and 240+ hours of instruction.
- Successfully executed the second year of our strategic plan.
- Hired two new staff, an Interpretation and Linguistic Strategist and Administrative Coordinator.



# A World Speaks Impact Story

When you include Language Access in your public meetings – amazing things happen!

The South Omaha Turnback Tax Grant Committee has a commitment to language access. The committee – which helps with a tax grant for small businesses - provided interpretation services through World Speaks at their public meetings.

In 2024, there were only a handful of applicants that needed interpreters – but in 2025 over 25 applicants needed interpretation help. Interpreters were at the formal meeting, but they also stayed afterwards to help applicants navigate forms and ask questions – ensuring that language is never a barrier to accessing funding.

When new and emerging small businesses can communicate clearly about their needs and understand the application process, everyone wins, strengthening the entire South Omaha community!



# What Our Students & Partners Have To Say

**My experience with having translation completed through World Speaks was so effortless. They provided a quick turnaround from start to finish. Communication was key with World Speaks. From my initial request to the finished product, World Speaks reps kept in constant contact.**

**SCHD - Translation Request**

**World Speaks provided a service that made our event accessible to our target demographic (immigrants and refugees), had an organized structure for making requests, communicated early and often about the details, and followed-up to confirm final details. The Spanish interpreter was able to switch between interpreting Spanish to English and English to Spanish when a bilingual lawyer was code switching between languages to answer questions depending on the original language of the question. It was extremely impressive to watch.**

**Open Doors Partner**

**Thank you for all the wonderful work you do, World Speaks! I love being able to engage with the Omaha community through your organization! :)**

**Community Course student**

**World Speaks has provided live interpretation for the Thriving Children, Families, and Communities Conference for the past three years. Each year, this opportunity has expanded in both reach and participation, thanks in large part to the professionalism and kindness the World Speaks team bring to the conference. Their personable and professional approach allows us to create a truly inclusive experience and offer this opportunity to all participants. We are deeply grateful for their continued partnership.**

**Communities for Kids - Interpretation Request**

**This course was lovely thanks to both instructors! They are both so knowledgeable and welcoming. Thank you for the support and encouragement during the activities. I see that you are both passionate about the support you provide. Thank you so much!**

**Interpreter Course student**

**Thank you and your team so much for taking on this project. I think the final product looks great and will be a wonderful resource for health centers to use.**

**HCAN - Interpretation Video Project**

**Staff interpreted the meeting in real time allowing non-english speaking applicants to fully participate in the discussion and award process. Everyone from World Speaks is always a pleasure to work with and I am so appreciative the organization is able to provide this critical service for our grant applicants. Thank you!**

**City of Omaha/City Council - Interpretation Request**

**I am so happy my friend shared World Speaks with me! We took the ASL course together. I hope to take another ASL class or spanish class in the future through y'all's org!**

**Community Course student**

# Thank You!

## Donors

- The Weitz Family Foundation
- The Sherwood Foundation
- The Lozier Foundation
- John and Dianne Scott Fund
- The Hawks Family Foundation
- The Millard Family Foundation
- The Mutual of Omaha Foundation

## Sponsorships

- Valmont Industries
- Physicians Mutual
- Emspace+ Lovgren

Additionally, we have to thank our volunteers, board, Programs Manager, Interpretation and Linguistic strategist, and Administrative Coordinator, Partners, Individual donors, and Funders for helping us achieve major milestones.

In 2026, we have hopes of expanding upon our programming and strategizing for the next 3 years. Thank you for all who have believed in this vision and continue to support and understand that language accessibility is equity.

**- Leah Whitney Chavez**  
Executive Director & Founder



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