

ANNUAL REPORT

2024

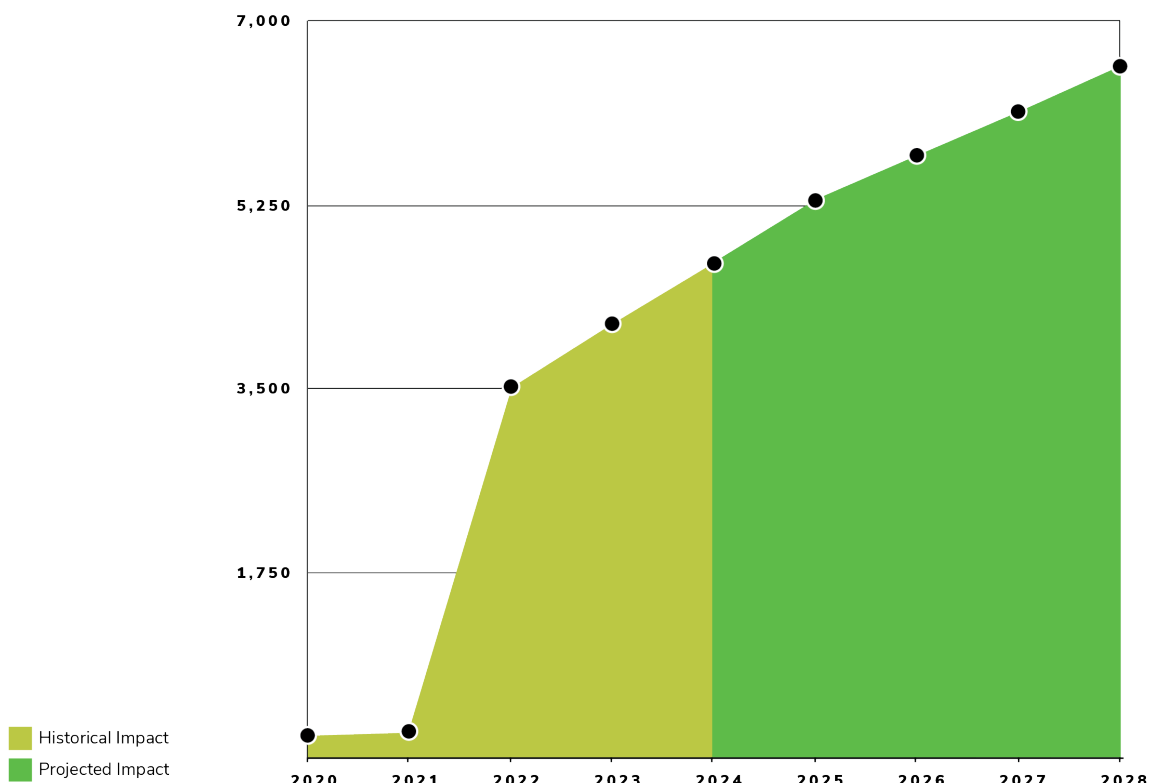


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www.iskali.org | www.casaiskali.org

FROM A SMALL GROUP OF YOUNG ADULTS IN A BASEMENT IN A CHURCH TO IMPACTING THOUSANDS

What began as a small group of young adults gathering in a church basement has grown into a thriving ministry with a presence in five dioceses and over 20 parishes, proudly operating the only Latino-owned and operated Catholic retreat center in the country.

	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025	2026	2027	2028
Our Lady of Guadalupe Campus Retreat Center									
Youth Served	0	0	2,800	2,800	2,900	2,970	3,025	3,120	3,150
Adult Served	0	0	345	615	800	816	832	848	865
Iskali Initiatives									
Faith & Community Mentorship & Scholarship	180	210	292	430	546	655	875	1,035	1,275
Service to those in need	0	6	32	32	35	90	94	98	102
Sports & Wellness	0	0	0	180	250	500	535	572	700
	25	30	50	70	80	90	100	110	120
IMPACT: (people engaged)	205	246	3,519	4,127	4,701	5,301	5,731	6,143	6,572





Dear friends and supporters,

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As we reflect on 2024, we are filled with gratitude for the continued growth of our Iskali community. This year marks another important step on our journey toward our 15th anniversary in 2025, and we are humbled by the impact we are making across the Midwest and beyond.

Rooted in our four core pillars—Faith and Community, Mentorship and Scholarship, Sports and Wellness, and Service—we are blessed to share that nearly 5,000 lives have been impacted through Iskali’s programs and initiatives, including the work of Casa Iskali. This reflects the reach of our mission as we continue to cultivate faith, leadership, and a spirit of service in all we do.

Service remains at the heart of our mission, with over 300 volunteers contributing more than 14,000 hours to outreach efforts. Our 12 Service Days in Chicago, Milwaukee, and Indianapolis, along with our *40 Días, 40 Testimonios* campaign—reaching over 120,000 people across social media—highlight the lasting impact of our collective work.

To support this growth, we are enhancing our physical space at Casa Iskali, with new dorm rooms, private restrooms, and sports courts to promote wellness alongside spiritual and personal growth.

As we approach our 15th anniversary, we are excited for what’s ahead. Thank you for being a vital part of this journey. Your support helps us continue to make a profound impact, and we are deeply grateful.

May God bless you, and may our Virgencita de Guadalupe watch over us as we grow in faith, leadership, and service.



WHO WE ARE

Iskali empowers young Latinos by providing them with high-quality faith-based formation, guiding them to become transformative leaders.

We meet Latinos where they are, recognizing their unique talents and creating a space where they feel they truly belong. We believe in the strength of our young people and the power of faith and community to help them reach their full potential.

Our programs are designed to support their growth in all areas of life, offering faith-awakening retreats, small group communities, mentorship, scholarships, community college outreach, and leadership development.

OUR APPROACH



Faith & Community

We promote spiritual growth and build supportive communities, helping individuals connect with their faith and make a meaningful impact.



Mentorship & Scholarship

We assist first-gen Latino students with financial aid and guidance, awarding 102 scholarships in 3 years to encourage academic and personal growth.



Sports & Wellness

Our programs, such as volleyball, basketball, and 5k runs, enhance physical health and strengthen community bonds through active lifestyles.



Service to those in need

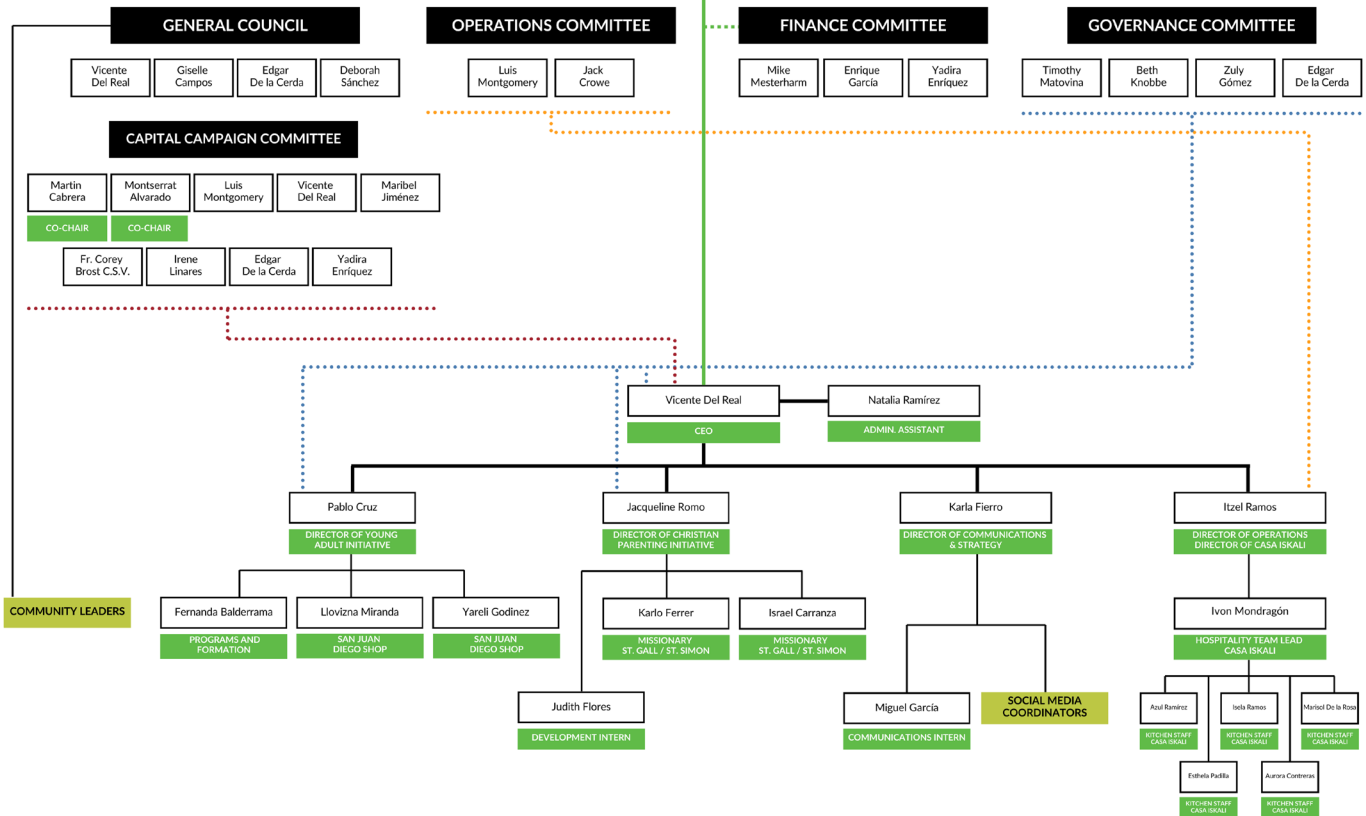
We provide monthly support to those in need in Chicago, Milwaukee, and Indiana, offering essential aid and fostering community compassion.

OUR TEAM



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CO-CHAIR	CO-CHAIR	BOARD TREASURER												



INVESTING IN OUR FUTURE

We have relied heavily on a strong volunteer base to run the organization and its programs. As Iskali grows, it has become necessary to:

BUILD CAPACITY

- Equipping leaders, expanding retreats, and strengthening small groups for Latino young adults.
- Creating new groups, fostering city collaboration, and providing resources for spiritual and social growth.
- Offering mentorship, scholarships, and formation to develop leadership, deepen faith, and empower communities.

RENOVATE CASA ISKALI

- Enhanced Amenities
- Multi-purpose Spaces
- Aesthetics and Ambiance Chapel
- Meeting Spaces and Fireside Room
- Overnight Accommodations
- Heated Indoor Pool

EXPAND PROGRAMMING

- Evangelization and Retreats
- Discipleship Communities
- Mentorship Program
- Scholarship Fund
- Sports Program
- Formation and Service

+expand our team with dedicated leaders!



Jaqueline Romo

Director of Christian Parenting Initiative

This year, Iskali welcomed Jaqueline Romo as the Director of the Christian Parenting Initiative, a key step in our vision for the future.

Jacqueline will lead efforts to accompany and empower young Latino adults stepping into the profound vocation of parenthood.

Her role reflects our commitment to equipping these young parents with faith-centered tools and community support, ensuring they navigate this transformative chapter with confidence and purpose.

This initiative is a vital investment in Iskali's mission to nurture the next generation, rooted in faith, hope, and love.

OUR IMPACT

5
Retreats



RETREAT PARTICIPANTS

200 38
Initiation Discipleship
86 Leaders who served 20



FORMATION PROGRAMS

71 98
Iskali 101 students 2024 (Levels 1&2) students



COMMUNITIES

20 Small communities
15 Chicago
02 Milwaukee
02 Indianapolis
01 Minnesota

35 coordinators

FAITH & COMMUNITY

STORIES OF SUCCESS

ROSALINDA RAMOS

Rosalinda Ramos, a member of Iskali, is one of eight students awarded the Master of Divinity scholarship at the University of Notre Dame. Now in her first year of the three-year program, Rosalinda's journey reflects the powerful intersection of faith, leadership, and personal formation. "I wanted an authentic Catholic education and to be part of a community that shares my values," she says. "For me, being authentic in my faith has been key to my discernment and purpose."

At Notre Dame, Rosalinda is immersed in a diverse community, where students from different backgrounds unite with a shared mission: to create God's kingdom wherever they go. "I've learned that God transforms people through their weaknesses, regardless of race or culture," she explains. Rosalinda was one of just eight students selected from over 40 applicants, and she views the program as an opportunity to serve the community in an integral way, touching the human, spiritual, emotional, and physical aspects of life.

Rosalinda envisions combining her passion for theology and fashion design to support young women in discovering their true identity and self-worth, beyond societal pressures. "I want to show them that our identity is rooted in theology and who we are in Christ," she shares. Looking ahead, Rosalinda is committed to working with the Hispanic community, developing leaders grounded in faith, and supporting both clergy and laity in their shared mission.

Her time at Notre Dame has deepened her sense of purpose. "This experience motivates me every day — for my ministry, my future family, and the community I'll serve," Rosalinda says. Her story is a testament to the power of leadership and formation, values that are at the heart of the Master of Divinity program and its mission to prepare leaders for the Catholic Church.





This past Lent 2024, we had the blessing of sharing something truly special — the “40 Días, 40 Testimonios” campaign. It was a journey of grace, growth, and transformation, as we shared the personal stories of young adults from the Iskali community.

Each story was an invitation to witness the power of God’s love at work in the lives of people just like us. Real stories. Real change.

Looking back now, we are filled with gratitude for what God has done through this campaign. In the span of Lent, we reached over 120,000 people across Instagram, Facebook, and YouTube. But the numbers don’t tell the full story. It’s not just about reach; it’s about the hearts we’ve touched and the connections we’ve made.

Social media became a platform for something more meaningful — a space where young adults could find hope, share in the testimonies of others, and feel part of a larger community of faith.

Through likes, comments, shares, and personal messages, we saw how these stories were resonating with people. They weren’t just watching, they were engaging, reflecting, and connecting with the experiences shared.

At the core of this campaign was community. Iskali isn’t just about individuals — it’s about walking together in faith, supporting one another, and growing as a family in Christ. These testimonies reminded us that we are all on this journey together. We are all part of a mission to serve others, share God’s love, and live out our faith in real, tangible ways.

As we shared these stories, we also invited others to join us in this mission. To be part of something bigger than themselves — to take the next step in serving others, growing in faith, and sharing their own testimonies of God’s goodness. Lent 2024 may be over, but the mission continues. We pray that the impact of this campaign will be long-lasting, continuing to inspire others to live lives of joy, service, and love.



Scan to watch the full playlist

MENTORSHIP & SCHOLARSHIP

SCHOLARSHIP

105
scholarship in the past three years

25
In 2024

24 Universities | **05** States

LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT

135
young adults in leadership roles

These leaders have received training in leadership development, communication skills, personal growth, and key competencies.



STORIES OF SUCCESS

BRIAN SALCEDO

Brian Salcedo, a first-generation Iskali member and an undocumented immigrant from Jalisco, Mexico, has always navigated life with faith and determination. Now a medical school graduate, Brian's story is a powerful testament to how faith, community, and perseverance can transform lives.

For Brian, his journey began with a profound sense of uncertainty. As an undocumented immigrant, he often felt caught between two worlds, not quite belonging to either. "I was afraid of deportation and unsure of where I belonged," Brian reflects. But through it all, one thing remained constant: prayer. For 16 years, his family turned to El Divino Niño (The Divine Child) in prayer, asking for guidance and residency.

Brian's faith deepened when he found Iskali, a faith-based community that would change his life. "Until Iskali came into my life, my relationship with God was not personal," he says. Through Iskali, he learned that God was not just a figure in his life, but a close, personal friend. "Iskali taught me that God is my best friend," Brian shares. This community helped him build a stronger, more authentic relationship with God, especially during his formative years.

Despite the challenges, including repeated setbacks in applying to medical schools, Brian remained unwavering in his belief that God's timing was perfect. "I took the entrance exam multiple times, applied to dozens of schools, and faced rejection after rejection," Brian recalls. But through prayer and support from his family and Iskali, he kept pushing forward. "Iskali was by my side every step of the way," he says. "The mentorship, the emotional support, and the reminder to keep my faith alive were crucial."

In the end, it was divine timing that led to his acceptance into medical school in Arizona. As he reflects on his journey, Brian is deeply grateful for the support he received, especially from Iskali, which not only provided financial assistance but also reminded him of what truly matters. "They helped me keep my faith strong during the toughest moments, reminding me that God was the priority in my life," he says.

Today, as Brian prepares to begin his career in medicine, he continues to rely on the strength of his faith and the community that supported him along the way. "I hope to serve my community as a doctor, grounded in faith and guided by my experiences with Iskali," he shares.

Brian's story is a powerful reminder that with faith, perseverance, and a supportive community, anything is possible. His journey reflects the transformative power of walking with God through every challenge, trusting in His perfect timing, and leaning on the community that walks alongside you.

"Without Iskali, I wouldn't have had the spiritual support and the community that was necessary to get me through difficult times and all aspects of my life," Brian says. "Pray tonight, pray with your families and communities, and walk alongside God in all that you do."

SERVICE

12
Service Days

10 Chicago
01 Milwaukee
01 Indianapolis

300
total volunteers



14,090
total volunteer hours



9,680
volunteer hrs. for
retreats and
planning.

2,160
Running
communities

05 Served organizations

1,936
hours for each retreat

1,280
Programming &
direct impact

970
Serving those in
need



SPORTS & WELLNESS



Each week

60

young adults engage in
sports programs at St.
Simon and Queen of All
Nations





CASA ISKALI IMPACT

**Casa Iskali strives to be,
“A space where everyone
can feel welcomed,
loved, forgiven, and
encouraged”**

(Evangelli Gaudium, 114)

**Casa Iskali offers a welcoming environment for
retreats, spiritual renewal, and community.**



2024 IMPACT

16,785

Plates served

2,960

Guests

63

Events held at
Casa Iskali

12

Iskali Events
including retreats

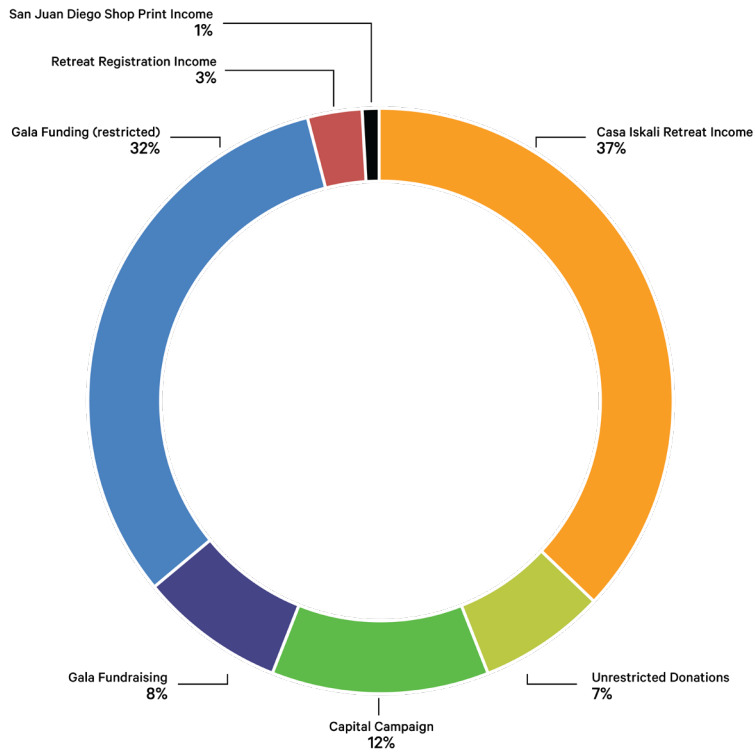
38

Parishes and High
School retreats



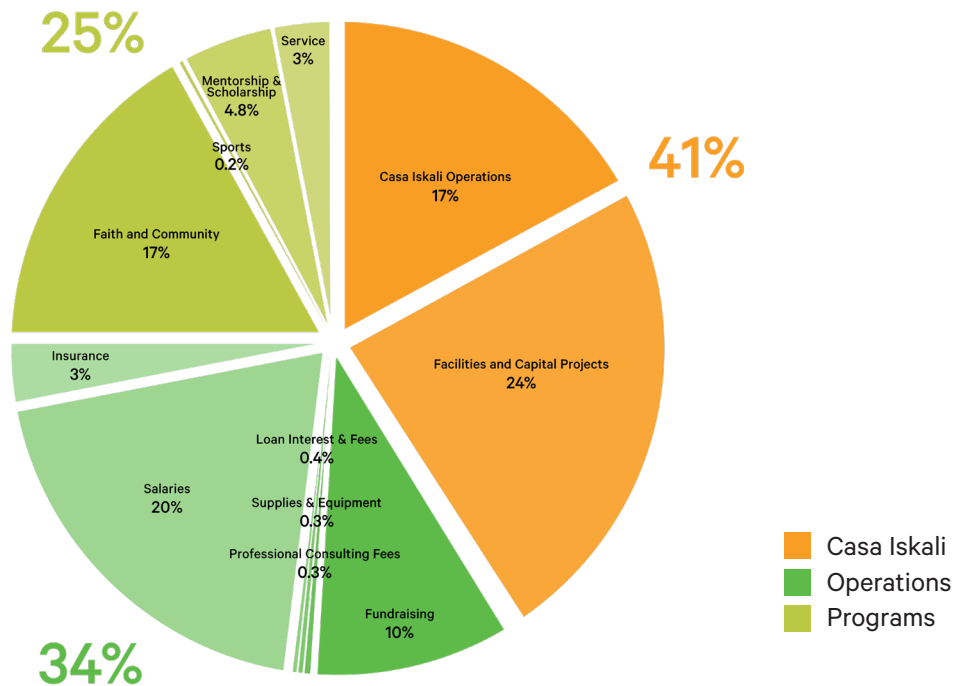
2024 FINANCIALS

INCOME
\$1'611,719.56



NET INCOME
\$150,417.38

EXPENSES
\$1'461,302.18



CAPITAL PROJECTS

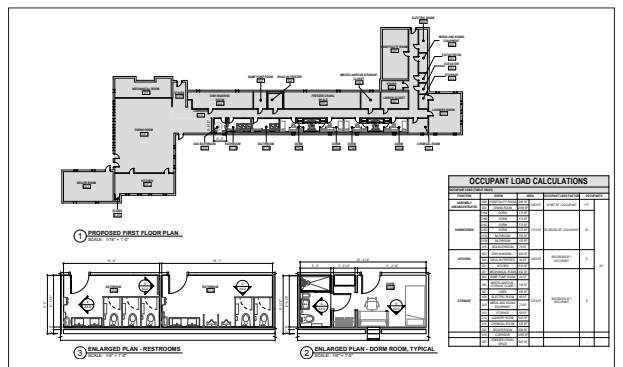
Enhancements to Casa Iskali Facilities

As part of the renovation plan for Casa Iskali, separate men's and women's restrooms will be added in the basement, along with four dorm rooms, each featuring a private bathroom and shower, utilizing the remaining space.

These enhancements will improve our facilities, increase capacity, and provide more comfortable accommodations for the community's needs.

We are currently developing a basketball court and a volleyball court to further provide our community members with spaces for engaging in sports and wellness activities.

This initiative reflects one of our core pillars, emphasizing the importance of nurturing physical well-being alongside spiritual and personal growth. By creating these facilities, we aim to promote a healthier lifestyle and foster a sense of camaraderie within our community.



ON GOING PARTNERSHIPS

Fostering Faith and Community: The McGrath Institute and Iskali Partnership

In 2022, the McGrath Institute for Church Life at the University of Notre Dame received a \$1.5 million grant from the Lilly Endowment to strengthen Hispanic Catholic communities and build cultures of affiliation at the parish level.

Partnering with Iskali, the Institute is serving Hispanic Catholic young adults in 12 U.S. parishes. This collaboration blends McGrath's expertise in faith formation with Iskali's hands-on approach to one-on-one accompaniment, addressing the unique needs of first, second, and third-generation Hispanics. Together, they are creating a culture of co-responsibility in congregations, offering young adults solid Catholic formation and pastoral care tailored to their cultural realities.

This partnership is already closing the gap in resources and ministries for Hispanic young adults, a group that makes up 50% of the U.S. Catholic Church but has often been underserved.



Iskali chosen as partner in Boston College's Nuevo Momento Initiative

Through this collaboration, Iskali will gain access to vital resources, leadership development programs, and financial support to strengthen its ministry.

The initiative, backed by a grant from Lilly Endowment, is designed to help Iskali build a sustainable organizational infrastructure while providing advanced training for its leaders. For Iskali, this partnership means greater opportunities for faith formation, leadership development, and community engagement, all tailored to their unique cultural and spiritual needs.

As part of the Nuevo Momento initiative, Iskali will be able to deepen its impact, equipping Latino young adults with the tools to lead, thrive, and make meaningful contributions to both the church and society.



Iskali receives 2024 Traditioned Innovation Award by Leadership Education at Duke Divinity for Empowering Latino Young Adults

Iskali has been awarded the 2024 Traditioned Innovation Award by Leadership Education at Duke Divinity for its outstanding work in blending Christian traditions with innovative ministry practices. Recognized for its impact on Latino young adults, Iskali empowers them to lead, grow, and deepen their faith while embracing both their cultural and spiritual identities. As part of the award, Iskali will receive a **\$10,000 grant** and be featured in Faith & Leadership. This recognition highlights Iskali's commitment to fostering leadership, building community, and creating lasting impact rooted in Christian traditions.

ISKALI THANKS YOU

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A special thank you to La Familia Jiménez, Iskali Inspire Award Recipients 2024, for your dedication and lasting impact on our mission.

