



## El Pollo Loco Creates Hispanic Heritage Month Grant Initiative to Support Latina Small Businesses

'El Pollo Local Grants' Infuses \$100,000 Directly to Latina Business Community and Encourages Greater Los Angeles to Join Effort

COSTA MESA, Calif., Sept. 15, 2020 (GLOBE NEWSWIRE) -- [El Pollo Loco, Inc.](#) ("El Pollo Loco" or "Company") (Nasdaq: LOCO), the nation's leading fire-grilled chicken restaurant chain, honors its Hispanic heritage and Los Angeles roots by committing to support Latina-owned small businesses across Los Angeles during Hispanic Heritage Month as a way to give back to the communities that shaped and influenced the brand.

The Hispanic community in the United States, particularly in El Pollo Loco's hometown of Los Angeles, is among the hardest hit by the current pandemic. According to the Stanford Latino Entrepreneurship Initiative Survey, nearly two-thirds of Latinx-owned businesses say they will not be able to continue operating beyond six months if current conditions continue<sup>1</sup>.

In fact, Hispanic women have been more significantly impacted by job loss than any other demographic<sup>2</sup>—which inspired the creation of the [El Pollo Local Grants](#) program, a commitment of \$100,000 in grant money for Latina-owned businesses in Los Angeles.

As part of the grant program, El Pollo Loco is encouraging Los Angeles-based customers, businesses and community members to stand with them and take action—and reach even more local small businesses by making donations through the [Go Fund Me platform](#). For every additional \$10,000 raised through this campaign, El Pollo Local Grants will help another Latina-owned business stay open.

"This year has been unlike any other, leaving Latina-owned businesses disproportionately impacted," said Bernard Acoca, President and Chief Executive Officer at El Pollo Loco. "Given the critical role brands are expected to play during the pandemic and on the heels of Hispanic Heritage Month, we felt compelled to find a way to support the people and city we call home."

### Funding Latina Food Jefas

As part of [El Pollo Local Grants](#), the company teamed up with [#WeAllGrow Latina](#) to connect with the community and create a first-of-its-kind nationwide business directory of Latina-owned small businesses in the food and restaurant space. The company is encouraging the community to take an active role in nominating these businesses and the women behind them.

"When El Pollo Loco approached us about working together to support the local Latina business community, we were all in," said Ana Flores, Founder and CEO of #WeAllGrow Latina. "We know that Latinas are driving economic gains that create generational wealth for the broader community, but that the circumstances of COVID-19 have posed a significant threat to our progress. This program will provide the exposure, mentorship, and the cash that women in our community, specifically those in the food industry, need to adapt their businesses to this new reality."

<sup>1</sup> [Stanford Latino Entrepreneurship Initiative Survey, "The Impact of COVID-19 on Latino-Owned Businesses"](#) May 11, 2020

<sup>2</sup> [Pew Research Center, June 9, 2020](#)

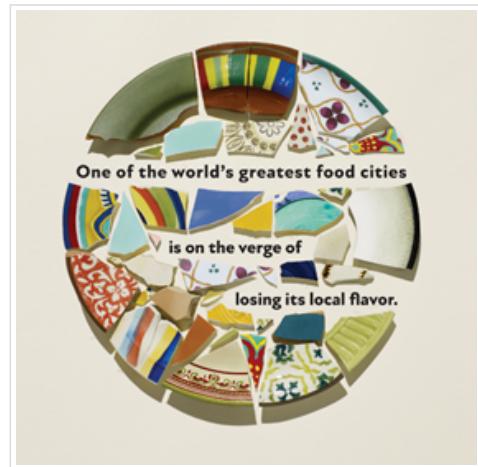
Starting now through September 25, the community can nominate their favorite Latina-owned food brand based in Greater Los Angeles with the hashtag #FundLatinaFoodJefas for a chance to receive a \$10,000 grant that can immediately be put to use to grow their opportunities, expand their reach, and thrive within the immensely difficult context of the present moment.

To complete a submission to be part of the first-ever national directory of Latina entrepreneurs in the food industry, visit [weallgrowlatina.com/fundlatinafoodjefas](#). For more information and to contribute to the El Pollo Local Grants program, visit [gofundme.com/EPLGrants](#).

### About #WeAllGrow Latina

#WeAllGrow Latina was founded in 2010 based on a simple yet revolutionary idea: to build a community of authentic voices and connections for Latinas to increase visibility and grow our social and economic power. We stand strong in our mission of elevating the voices and stories of Latinas via the power of community through culturally-relevant content, virtual and in-person spaces and events to

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bring together a sisterhood of the most influential Latina creatives, entrepreneurs and professionals.

## About El Pollo Loco

El Pollo Loco (Nasdaq:[LOCO](#)) is the nation's leading fire-grilled chicken restaurant with a mission to bring people together around food, family, and culture in the communities it serves. El Pollo Loco is renowned for its handcrafted L.A. Mex food, an innovative blend of traditional Mexican cuisine and better-for-you eating, that Los Angeles is known for. Since 1980, El Pollo Loco has successfully opened and maintained more than 475 company-owned and franchised restaurants in Arizona, California, Nevada, Texas, Utah, and Louisiana while remaining true to its Mexican-American heritage. El Pollo Loco continues to grow and evolve, nourishing connections to tradition, culture, and one another through fire-grilled goodness that makes us feel like familia. For more information, visit us at [www.elpolloloco.com](#).

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