

## HOLA Ohio Gets Celebrations and Preparations Ready for Opening of Hispanic Community Center and Commercial Kitchen

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*Architect rendering of the HOLA Hispanic Community Center, located at 265 N State St. in Painesville, set to open in May 2022. Photo taken from the HOLA Ohio Facebook page.*

After \$2 million and years of planning and anticipation, HOLA Ohio is counting down the days to opening day. This opening day, though, is not for the Cleveland Guardians or any sports franchise, it's for HOLA's brand-new Hispanic Community Center in Painesville.

HOLA Ohio, an Ohio-based non-profit that works to empower the local Latino and Hispanic communities, Executive Director and Founder Veronica Dahlberg has waited and worked tirelessly to open the center. Its grand opening is set for May 5, 2022.

"It's been a dream come true," Dahlberg said about the Hispanic Community Center in a phone interview.

The grand opening has a ribbon-cutting ceremony with the Painesville Chamber of Commerce, a blessing of the grounds by a local church, food, a traditional Mexican folklore group, tours of the building and more.

"This is really the first time we have had our own space," Dahlberg said. "It's a beautiful space. So, the sky's the limit."

Once its opened, a big focus for the center is education and providing needed services to Painesville community, a city that is 26.6% Latino or Hispanic according to the [2020 U.S. Census Bureau](#).

According to Dahlberg, the center will provide several different services:

- educational services for children,
- GED classes,
- medical and mental health care,
- immigration assistance,
- literacy events,
- nutrition classes provided by two chefs from Mexico
- cultural events and
- citizenship prep classes

“Painesville, you know, is a city where there is 100% poverty rate in the schools, and the schools are 60% Hispanic,” Dahlberg said. “So, the community center, our goal is to improve educational outcomes in the school, provide support for the Latino community and an area, a safe space, that’s culturally competent and language accessible.”

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