

# Papitto Opportunity Connection

*June 2023*

## **The Slyest Fox In The Northeast**

Cheers to the best chef in the Northeast!!! Congratulations to Chef Sherry Pocknett who just made history as the first Indigenous woman to EVER win a James Beard Award, which celebrates America's food culture. Sherry was honored as the 2023 Best Chef Northeast.

As the owner of the intimate 30-seat Sly Fox Den Too Charlestown, she has continued to keep Wampanoag traditions alive in her kitchen. She has a passion for food and shares her culture by educating the community through her cooking. Sherry shares that the Indigenous community are the original farm-to-table cooks. Countless generations have passed on traditions of cooking locally and seasonally, learning to forage, hunt, farm and utilize local produce, support sustainably-raised meat and poultry and serve responsibly-sourced fish.



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While we are so proud of Sherry and her accomplishments, the James Beard judges didn't have to tell us how amazing Chef Sherry is. We already knew that and so did the hundreds of POC funded nonprofit organizations who were able to enjoy Sherry's Three Sisters rice, homemade salad dressing, signature hash, corn cakes with fresh cranberries and all of the other delicious food she whipped up for the inaugural Papitto Opportunity Connector Conference last fall. Our mouths are still watering.

Please join us in congratulating Sherry!



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## Celebrate Juneteeth

Juneteenth commemorates the historic day — June 19, 1865 — that marked the emancipation of enslaved African Americans in the Confederate. On this day, we collectively celebrate African American liberation, accomplishments and contributions through education, inner strength, effective communication, and endurance.





Papitto Opportunity Connection is proud to support the fifth annual Juneteenth RI Festival Weekend, (June 15 -18) which features live music, a comedy show, a Black History walking tour through Providence's East Side, cultural readings, face painting for youth and much more. The highlight of the weekend is the free day-long festival on Sunday, June 18 at Roger Williams Park's Temple to Music. The annual event, which draws thousands of people and fosters unity, will be held from 12pm to 8pm and features a live performance from R&B and gospel singer Kelly Price.

For more information, visit [here](#).

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## Happy Pride!

Papitto Opportunity Connection celebrates inclusivity and recognizes a few of our partner organizations who are focused on LGBTQIA+ (lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer or questioning, intersex, asexual, and more) advocacy and cultural change.

Youth Pride, Inc. (YPI) is the only nonprofit in the state of Rhode Island solely dedicated to meeting the needs of LGBTQIA+ youth. YPI offers youth between the ages of 5-25 free resources that include individual counseling, case management, and housing and rental assistance. YPI also hosts four different weekly support groups, three different wellness groups including yoga, Dungeons & Dragons, and a cooking class called Queer Gourmet.

The center operates as a drop-in space, facilitating access to a basic needs pantry, LGBTQIA+ Diversity professional development training to the community, and is home to Rhode Island's Gender Sexuality Alliance (GSA) Network for schools.



## With Strength & Pride!

Stop by YPI's tent during [Rhode Island Pride](#), June 17, in downtown Providence to learn more about their impact, resources, meet staff, purchase Pride swag, or check out their rainbow piggy bank on wheels!

For more information or to take advantage of YPI's programs and services, visit [here](#).



[Haus of Codec](#) opened its doors in December 2021 as Providence's first emergency shelter specifically geared to Transition Age Youth (TAY) between the ages of 18 - 24 who self identify as LGBTQIA+. Since its inception, the organization has focused on building community through the arts and educational empowerment, being committed to ensuring an end to transition-aged youth homelessness in Providence through the arts, and workforce development.

TAY is working to create a safer and more accessible means to housing, care, and essential services for displaced transition aged youth.



Haus of Codec provides critical services to the local Queer, Trans, and BIPOC communities by helping them find stable housing, income, and access to healthcare through the support of partnering organizations. The organization also offers access to a food pantry, a free hot meal per day, a clothing pantry, art supplies, free access to therapy sessions and paid workforce opportunities focusing on the arts, construction, grounds-keeping, event planning and nonprofit administration.

Click [here](#) to learn more.





The Steel Yard, a nonprofit organization offering unique courses in industrial arts, has a few spots remaining for this summer's Camp Sparkle, the LGBTQIA+ youth day camp. Held July 10 – July 21 in Providence, Camp Sparkle provides training for young people 14-18 in both jewelry & welding. The camp is instructed by LGBTQIA+ identified mentors and provides an identity-affirming space for young folks to express themselves.



Sparkle Campers additionally meet other LGBTQIA+ creatives and organizations. Past partners have included Queer.Archive.Work, Fierce Drag Jewels, and k\_zao Tailoring.

Click [here](#) to learn more.



## National Immigrant Heritage Month

The United States is a nation of immigrants. During [National Immigrant Heritage Month](#), we acknowledge the rich diversity of our immigrant communities and the countless ways immigrants have contributed to American society, economy, and culture. Papitto Opportunity Connection is proud to showcase some of our many partners who work to empower immigrants and refugees and provide crucial services to those embarking on a new journey in the United States, searching for a better future and the promise of the American Dream.

Imagine that you just arrived in a new country. You find yourself in unfamiliar surroundings amongst unfamiliar faces. You don't know a soul, speak, or understand the language. You don't have a place to live, yet this is the place you now call home.

That is what it is like to be a refugee entering America.



For over 100 years, [Dorcas International Institute of Rhode Island](#) has been welcoming immigrants and refugees to Rhode Island making sure those entering the Ocean State experience a seamless transition and have their basic needs met as they look to resettle in the smallest state. Dorcas International aims to empower immigrants and refugees by offering various support services from housing and healthcare, to English language classes, to education opportunities, and job training. Each program is designed to help the most vulnerable members of the community acclimate to their new surroundings, build self-sufficiency, thrive and succeed in Rhode Island.

The [Census Bureau's monthly Current Population Survey \(CPS\)](#) shows that the total foreign-born or immigrant population (permanent residents and undocumented residents) in the U.S. hit 47.9 million in September 2022. That's a record high in American history. Immigrants from Latin American countries other than Mexico account for 60 percent of the increase in the foreign-born population since January 2021.



In Rhode Island, Newport and Middletown have seen a significant increase in their immigrant populations. Conexión Latina Newport's Executive Director, Rebekah Rosen-Gomez, has been working closely with families in these coastal communities.

"Our community is still very, very, far behind in Newport. As far as Hispanic representation, there's close to 9,000 Latino residents, but most keep to themselves. They don't show up at things. They don't come out because they don't feel welcome or feel apprehensive. However, some are starting to," said Rosen-Gomez.





Conexión Latina Newport strives to educate, inform, mobilize, and advocate for Latinos in Newport, as well as advise and partner with social services, education, and government agencies, on how to best meet the needs of this growing segment of the population. Through its work in the community, Conexión Latina Newport has discovered Latina immigrants living in Newport need gender specific nurturing services, community building, and stress relief. Inspired to create change, Conexión Latina Newport launched the program Mujeres Poderosas (Powerful Women). With support from POC, the platform provides women the opportunity to meet, express needs, learn, and network. Those attending the inaugural meeting were treated to massages and made dream board collages envisioning a better future for their families.

“In Latino culture, family and community are important. It truly takes a village. When they immigrate to the US, many of them lose their safety net completely. They're 100% dependent on their husbands or sustain the burden to provide for their children. Most work two, and sometimes three, jobs. That can be devastating,” said Rosen-Gomez. “Our hope is that the program will grow and allow this group of women to thrive and make their own lives better.”

For more info on their programs and services, click [here](#).