

The Rainbow Project's 2021 Extra Mile Award

Lupita and Luis Montoto

Twenty-one years ago, Luis and Lupita Montoto founded La Movida, Madison's first and only Spanish-language radio station. It started as a few-hours-long radio program and grew into a 24/7 station that has continued to expand, creating a very much-needed bridge between the Latino community and the dominant population in the South-Central Wisconsin and Rockford areas. La Movida has served as an important transit of information for this population including politics, news, immigration law/rights, health, business, community services, resources, education, employment and other opportunities. Their goal from the beginning has been to empower the Latino community by building strong relationships with organizations and companies that care about the well-being of the Latino community in Madison and across the country. La Movida has supported and collaborated with different organizations such as Centro Hispano, Catholic Multicultural Center, United Way of Dane County, AIDS Network, Latino Chamber of Commerce of Dane County, Latino Health Council, Madison College and UW-Madison, among others. They have also collaborated with the Rainbow Project and Formando Lazos Familiares, a program in which Rainbow participates, in providing important mental health information, resources and promotions of programs and events, such as Rhumba for Rainbow.

La Movida's staff bring our community together for fun, family-oriented entertainment for people of all ages, while showcasing the contributions and growth of the Latino demographic in the Greater Madison area. They volunteer their time at Radiothons in the city to raise funds for worthy causes, and they are regulars at the Dane County Fair and the Jefferson County Fair. They help host a "Family Day" at Little Amerricka in Marshall and the Viva Mexico celebration at the Alliant Energy Center. They also host the annual Hispanic Heritage Luncheon. The Montotos also own Voz Latina, a Spanish-language newspaper that compliments the radio station in keeping the Latino community informed.

La Movida has won many awards by the Wisconsin Broadcasters Association, and was a finalist for Station of the Year for the 2019 Medallas de Cortez awards at the Radio Ink Hispanic Radio Conference. The Montotos were also honored at the 2011 Public Health Awards ceremony, where they won the Advocacy Award for their personal and professional commitment to providing print and radio coverage of public health issues and services for the Latino community.

With their open and down-to-earth demeanors, Lupita and Luis have formed connections to Dane County's agencies and businesses through countless collaborations and partnerships to benefit the Latino community. La Movida reaches a huge audience, including Latinos who are isolated, marginalized or living in rural areas, allowing them to interact and feel connected to other Latinos in the community who have gone or are going through similar experiences. It doesn't matter how much money or education that listeners may have, they can listen to stories similar to theirs and explore new solutions, realizations or ideas. As Latino immigrants themselves, Lupita and Luis are aware of the unique life experiences, struggles and strengths of the Latino population: They know what questions to ask. They know what information may be most important for marginalized Latino families who may be experiencing mental health problems. They talk to the audience in a genuine tone, as equals, friends or colleagues, creating a relationship that is not threatening, that builds trust, and makes people listen. It is because of La Movida that Latino parents in the area can learn on the radio about signs of depression in children or listen to a radionovela about domestic violence and learn where to get help or treatment — all while they're cooking, driving or gardening.

For their commitment and passion for empowering Latinos through their radio station, join us in thanking and congratulating Lupita and Luis Montoto for their great work that has earned them an Extra Mile Award. Thank you for all that you do, Lupita and Luis!

