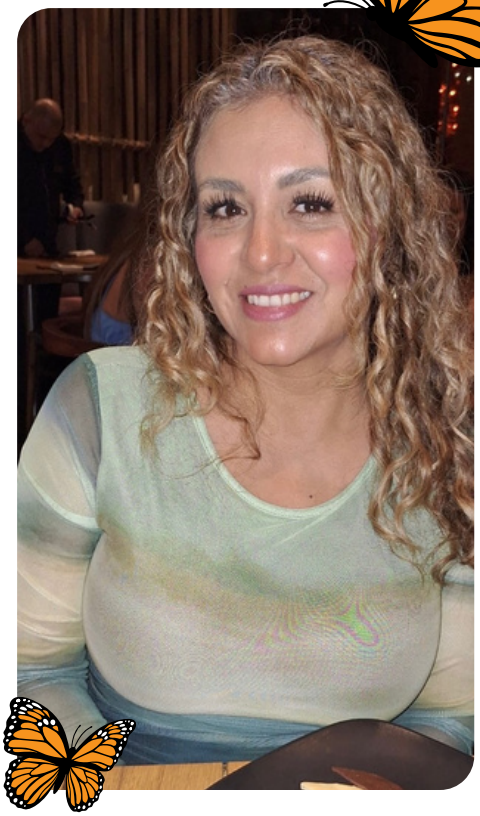
MANA DE SAN DIEGO SINCE 1986

Latina Upward Mobility Initiative

Meet Yesenia — LUMI Success Story



When Yesenia joined LUMI Cohort 1, she was balancing work, motherhood, and college. With LUMI's support — from confidence-building workshops to a donated laptop and guaranteed income — she gained the tools, community, and encouragement she needed to keep moving forward.

A big part of her growth came from the holistic support she received from the LUMI team. She often mentioned how supported she felt — through care, empathy, resources, and consistent encouragement to keep advancing. This nurturing environment gave her the confidence to push forward and believe in her abilities.

One moment that stood out for her was the resume workshop. She shared how eye-opening it was to look at everything she had accomplished and realize the true value of her work. That reflection boosted her confidence and helped her see herself as the capable, skilled professional she already was and even empowered her to advocate for herself more confidently in the workplace.

Through LUMI's partnerships, Yesenia also received her own laptop from the San Diego Futures Foundation, a simple but meaningful resource that eliminated the stress of sharing a device with her daughter and allowed her to successfully complete her schoolwork. And with the support of the guaranteed income, she was able to afford textbooks and reduce financial pressure at home — giving her the breathing room she needed to stay focused and continue moving forward.

By the end of the cohort, she reached a major milestone: she earned her Associate Degree in Accounting from San Diego City College.

And now, six months after completing the LUMI program, we're seeing the ripple effects of her growth. Yesenia was promoted and now serves as a Finance Manager, a role that reflects her talent, dedication, and the confidence she strengthened through LUMI. She also aspires to continue her education and pursue her Bachelor's Degree.

In her own words: "Although my new title overwhelms me, I know I can do this! Thank you, LUMI, for providing me the push that I sooo needed!"

Yesenia's journey is a powerful example of how MANA fulfills its mission of transforming communities by empowering Latinas to achieve upward mobility and a better quality of life. Her story shows the lasting impact of LUMI — one that continues well beyond graduation as Latinas rise, thrive, and lead.