

**“I spent my whole life thinking if I keep my head down, if I do community work, if I do the grassroots work, that’s what matters”- Laura Camila Rivera**

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# ***Community Letters***

**by Lisandra Lamboy, '13**

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Laura Camila Rivera, National Urban Fellow, Class of 2025

When I heard Laura Camila Rivera share these words, they deeply resonated with me. While Laura was advocating for food security in Puerto Rico, I was working on food justice initiatives here on the mainland. Though our work took place in different locations, we share a deep understanding of the critical intersection between grassroots community work and policy advocacy.

What struck me most in our conversation was the shared recognition that lasting change requires leaders who can navigate both community and policy spaces. Laura's journey from running a marketing agency for minority-owned businesses to advocating for Puerto Rico's NAP to SNAP transition exemplifies the kind of leadership that NUF cultivates – and that our communities desperately need. Now, as part of the Fellowship, she's bringing her unique perspective to her mentorship at the NFL Player Care Foundation.

Today, I'm reaching out to ask for your support in continuing this vital work. As someone who has walked this path, I can attest to the transformative power of the NUF Fellowship.

Laura's words ring especially true today: "This is the time. This is incredibly important for us right now. As organizations pull back their funding when it comes to DEI, when it comes to affirmative action, when it comes to supporting these communities... we have to work just to keep us going at a baseline level."