Salsa for scholarships? There is not an immediate connection between dancing and supporting educational advancement. Unless, of course, you have been to Salsa Night! For over three years, the Central Illinois Chapter of National Image Inc. (now known as CIELO) raised money for Latino student scholarships by hosting its weekly Salsa Nights. Every Saturday night you would find a melting pot of people dancing the night away - all for the sake of raising money for post-secondary Latino scholarships.

Then their efforts went a step further to help Latino students in Sangamon County receive a first rate education, specifically for those students pursuing a medical related degree by establishing the CIELO Medical Scholarship Fund (formerly the National Image, Inc. Central Illinois Chapter Medical Scholarship Fund) at the Community Foundation. This scholarship fund was the very first scholarship fund of the Community Foundation.

“This medical scholarship will be here for years to come to help students pursue their dreams,” said Christina Romero, then President of Image Inc. “Latino students often face language, cultural and financial barriers in achieving their goals. We felt that setting aside scholarship funds for Latinos in the medical field would help open doors for students.”

The scholarship continues to grow and continues to offer scholarships to Latino students.