**KARLA ESTELA RIVERA**

Writer

**Karla Estela Rivera** (she/her) is a writer, performer, activist, and arts advocate that has leveraged her gift of storytelling to uplift and create opportunities for, with, and in underserved communities. She is the Executive Director of the historic Free Street Theater and a company member of 2nd Story in Chicago. In addition to her artistic work, Karla has served in nonprofit organizations for over a decade, beginning as a teaching artist and youth worker, to systems-level leadership in public affairs. She is currently a Campaign Correspondent for the [Campaign for a Creative Generation](https://creative-generation.org/karla-estela-rivera), and she previously served as the co-chair of the Illinois Fine Arts Indicator work group which developed the nation’s first weighted accountability measure for the arts as part of the Illinois Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) plan. Karla continues to perform in venues and Zoom Rooms across the country, and actively teaches storytelling and consults on advocacy initiatives. She is a native of Mayagüez, Puerto Rico, and holds a BA from Columbia College Chicago’s Department of Film & Video, with graduate studies at NYU.