Our AmeriCorps VISTA project has been expanding rapidly. We currently sponsor fourteen VISTAs and that is about to increase to sixteen as of April. We are currently recruiting five times a year, and in each of those rounds we have been adding member agencies to our list of VISTA host sites. NMCEH AmeriCorps VISTA members work with their host sites to build capacity for the agency, usually in the areas of fundraising and volunteer management.

All of our VISTA members do amazing things for their agencies. Within the last six months, our VISTAs have helped bring in nearly $200,000 of cash donations, through donor cultivation, grant research and writing and event coordination. On top of that, they brought in just over $125,000 of in-kind donations. During the same period, they were able to help recruit and coordinate 1,000 volunteers who gave over 10,000 hours of aid to the agencies.

NMCEH is always looking for new VISTA members. If you are interested in learning more about the VISTA project or serving with NMCEH as a VISTA Member, please contact Hana Gossett at hana-g@nmceh.org or 505.433.5175.

We are holding our second “Not Just for the Birds” auction of birdhouses and bird-related art on June 4, from 3pm to 5pm at the Scottish Rite Temple in Santa Fe. To donate an item or learn more call us at 505-982-9000.
**Remembering our Friend Paul Lanier**

*by Stephanie Lefebvre, Office Manager*

Our friend Paul Lanier, who became a member of the Coalition in 2010, knew a lot about homelessness. A bright man with a scientific background, Paul also struggled with mental illness, which remained untreated for a long time. Paul spent well over a decade living on the streets of Albuquerque, until first the Albuquerque Rescue Mission and then St. Martin’s Hospitality Center helped him get permanent housing and health care.

Once Paul was housed and healthy, he did not forget about others struggling with homelessness. Paul served on many NMCEH committees and boards over the years, and he often expressed his concerns about “the public stigma related to homelessness and about the 50% undiagnosed individuals living in the street for whom accessing services is the most challenging.” With kindness and humility, Paul shared many ideas and suggestions that helped the Coalition implement concrete solutions to ending homelessness.

After a lengthy illness, Paul passed away in February. We miss Paul’s friendship, kindness, generosity and support and we gratefully remember the time and energy he chose to give to help those still struggling with homelessness.

**NMCEH Still Advocating to Ensure Everyone Has an ID**

*by Lisa Huval, Associate Director*

Our main priority heading into the 2017 legislation session was to pass a bill that would make it easier for people experiencing homelessness to obtain a state ID card. MVD established new regulations last fall that have made it difficult for many people to obtain an ID.

Over 90 of our members attended our annual lobby day to educate legislators about the challenges with obtaining an ID, and the impact that has on those experiencing homelessness. We found that many legislators are deeply concerned about this issue and looking for solutions.

As Representative Stephanie Garcia Richard was preparing to introduce a bill that addresses some of the challenges to obtaining an ID, MVD let us know they wanted to address our concerns through regulation instead. We agreed this would be a better strategy. Representative Garcia Richard did introduce a bill in case MVD identified changes that needed to be made through legislation, but at this point we are expecting that many of these changes will happen through regulation and are waiting for MVD to issue draft updated regulations for public comment.

The other important issue for us this session is the budget. New Mexico is facing a serious budget shortfall, and legislators have a choice between making further deep cuts to programs or raising revenue. The legislature passed a budget bill that made some cuts, but also passed a bill to raise $350 million in revenue. The Governor is expected to veto both bills, so we will need to continue advocating for full funding for programs that end homelessness.
Our Sincere Gratitude Goes Out to These Individuals & Organizations

Thank You to Our Individual and Business Supporters (since last newsletter)

5 Star Burgers
Carol & Thomas Aageson
Paul Abrams, in honor of Abigail Adler
Amber Archer
John Baxter
Raphael & Karen Benjamin
Nancy Bennett, in memory of Richard J. Bennett
Jean Bergeron
Ameriprise
Peter & Honey Chapin
Ann Chavez
Christus St. Vincent
Thomas Claffey
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Community Foundation
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Miriam Sagan
Salon Santa Fe, Inc.
Melissa Savage
Second Anonymous Fund Santa Fe Community Foundation
Kathrynn Sherlock
Bonnie Stapleton
Toyota Santa Fe
Robert & Margaret Zone

Special Thanks to:

The Albuquerque Community Foundation for hosting many of our meetings in their lovely conference room.

United Way of Santa Fe County for hosting many of our Santa Fe meetings in their lovely conference room.


Enterprise Community Partners for sponsoring our Supportive Housing Toolkit series of workshops and Jenn Lopez and Zoe Lebeau for presenting the workshops.

The Lineberry Foundation for their generous grant.

All those who helped Santa Fe attain the designation of having effectively ended veteran homelessness including John Herman, Ed Archuleta, Lara Yoder, Joyce Arellano, Donna Trainer, Kip Vaughn, Elizabeth Martin and Joe Jordan-Berenis.

Representative Tomas Salazar, Representative Stephanie Garcia Richard, and Senator Howie Morales for carrying bills in the State Legislative Session that promote the goal of ending homelessness.

Advisory Board:
Abigail Adler, Tom Aageson, Peter Chapin, Gloria Holloway, Betty Baxter, Karen Beall

Veterans Helping Homeless Veterans Board:
Mike Barr, Revel Carr, Tom Aageson, Chris Calvert, Mark French, Raphael Benjamin.

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Member Organizations and Individuals: For a list of our 77 members, please go to www.nmceh.org
NMCEH Helps a Veteran Find Housing

by Donna Trainer, Coordinated Assessment Connection Specialist

When I first met David, he quietly walked through the doors of the Interfaith Shelter, not sure of where to look for services. David did an assessment with the Coalition to begin the process of obtaining housing through a Veterans Administration program. David is a very proud veteran who has served years in the Marine Corps, as well as the Army.

David has always been a hard worker, primarily as a skilled tradesman. While living in Albuquerque, his contract ended with the Department of Energy and he moved to Santa Fe, thinking he would have more opportunities for work. Ultimately, he struggled to find full time, long term work which led him to become homeless. He continued to work during this period of homelessness while living out of a tent the entire time. This eventually became too much for his physical and emotional health which led him to seek services, most especially housing.

As David was on the verge of being housed, he received his collection of military service medals in the mail; ranging from Good Conduct to Overseas Service Ribbon. He said that he was counting the days until he could hang them on the wall of his very own apartment.

As soon as David was housed, he was hired by his landlord to do maintenance and other tasks around his apartment complex. David takes pride in his work, as well as his volunteer job at Habitat for Humanity, which recently has led to paid employment in the organization.

David is very comfortable in his new home and is excited about new work prospects. With the stability of living in his apartment, he feels he will be able to gain full time employment and even further success. David smiles often these days, and seems to have reason to.