HOUSING FOR ALL!!!

NEWS FROM THE NEW MEXICO COALITION TO END HOMELESSNESS

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Linda Simon, of La Buena Vida, honored by Con Alma NM Hero of Health

Last year, the agency running Shelter + Care, the only housing assistance and support services for homeless persons with disabilities in Sandoval County went out of business leaving no one to run the program and all 23 of the clients potentially homeless again. Linda Simon, who had been the Shelter plus Care manager, jumped in to find a new agency to take the program. She coordinated moving the program to La Buena Vida, Inc. Then, on her own time, she successfully wrote an emergency grant to United Way to fund a part-time person to run the program. Linda then wrote more grants to help the Agency fund the program. As a result, not only was Linda able to secure housing for her disabled clients, but HUD ended up funding 10 more slots in the Program. Linda is now a full time La Buena Vida Shelter + Care Program Manager.

Linda Simon was nominated for Con Alma's New Mexico Hero of Health award by La Buena Vida clients. However, although Linda was not selected as Hero of Health, the nomination was so compelling that Con Alma made a $1,000 contribution to La Buena Vida to honor Linda's efforts and to recognize the individuals who nominate her.

La Buena Vida, Inc. is an outpatient family oriented mental health care agency and substance abuse health care agency.

Linda Simon kept the Shelter Plus Care program alive in Sandoval County

Village Sage Houses the Homeless in Santa Fe

Spencer Haynsworth of the Housing Trust gives Santa Fe Mayor David Coss a tour of Village Sage before the March inauguration

The Village Sage Apartments, a Santa Fe Community Housing Trust project, opened their doors this month. The Village Sage consists of 10 two-story green-built structures on six acres of land. A total of 60 apartments provide affordable housing and stabilization services for low-income residents. Located south of Santa Fe, in Tierra Contenta, across from Capitol High School, the compound has 15 apartments dedicated to formerly homeless households (six individuals and nine families). An on-site Service Coordinator, Patti Romero, regularly visits with the 15 households and refers them to services meeting their needs while insuring their housing stability. Partners in the community such as Life Link, Health Care for the Homeless (La Familia), Santa Fe Community Services and Santa Fe Community College support the project by providing training, education and health care services.

Our Sincere Gratitude Goes Out to These Individuals & Organizations

Special Thanks to:

- McCune Charitable Foundation, New Mexico Bank and Trust and Wells Fargo Bank for recent generous support.

-St. John Episcopal Cathedral Church in Albuquerque, United Church of Santa Fe, Mesilla Valley Community of Hope and Chuska Apartments in Gallup for their hospitality during Housing Stability workshop series.

-Piñon Fast Print for discount printing services.

-Dick Wagner of Wagner Digital, LLC, for discount webmaster services.

- Sheri Compton, Alexandra Sands, Nancy Sweet, Cherly Digman, Robert Walling, Paulette Poirier, Ken Goodwin, Darrell Reid, Charlotte Cooper, Rita Baldonado, Ruth Shortall, and Yvonne Scott for their help with the Albuquerque Point In Time Count.

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Homeless Advocacy, Lobby Day

by Lisa Huval, Policy and Advocacy Director

On January 26th, 60 people from across New Mexico, including Albuquerque, Santa Fe, Taos, Roswell and Las Vegas, joined us for the 5th annual NMCEH Lobby Day. Many participants were new to lobbying but many had also participated in previous NMCEH Lobby Days, and some of those folks returned this year as team captains. We began the day at the Inn of the Governors where Hank Hughes and Lisa Huval educated participants on how to lobby and on the NMCEH legislative priorities. This year we asked participants to focus on four NMCEH legislative priorities:

- Senate Bill 177 which would allow local municipalities and counties to ask voters to increase property taxes to fund affordable housing
- House Joint Memorial 22 which would create an Interagency Council on Homelessness
- Reinvesting in vital services that help New Mexicans keep their homes during these tough economic time, including General Assistance and homeless assistance funding.
- Raising the necessary revenue by making sure big corporations and the rich pay their fair share to support essential services.

After breakfast we walked up to the Roundhouse where participants broke into teams and began looking for the legislators their teams had been assigned to meet with. We met with and delivered materials about NMCEH legislative priorities to 50 legislators, and Santa Fe participants also met with the Governor's staff.

Many legislators told their constituents that this was a difficult session, since the Legislature has to close a huge budget shortfall for FY12 and the Governor has said she will not support any revenue increases. We know that we must keep the pressure on our Legislature not to cut funding for programs and services and instead make a better choice by increasing our investment in programs and services that help people exit and avoid homelessness. Lobby Day was an important day for doing that.

Senator Jerry Ortiz Y Pino meets with one of the lobby day teams at the State Capitol

2011 Legislative Session Recap

by Lisa Huval, Policy and Advocacy Director

Joel Jolly (right) who came to lobby day from Roswell is meeting with Senator Stuart Ingle (left) and Hank Hughes

The 2011 Legislative Session ended at 12pm on Saturday, March 19st. During this legislative session, legislators were responsible for closing a budget gap of several hundred million dollars for Fiscal Year 2012 (FY12). They did so in part by passing a FY12 budget that cuts $152 million, or 2.7%, in state spending. This is on top of cuts that state agencies had already sustained in FY10 and FY11. The Legislature did not seriously consider any revenue-raising bills that would have ensured the wealthiest New Mexicans and big corporation pay their fair share, such as reversing the 2003 tax cuts for the wealthiest New Mexicans and closing the tax loophole that allows large out-of-state corporations to get out of paying taxes on profits made in New Mexico.

Several programs that the NMCEH was tracking fared well in the FY12 budget. Funding for General Assistance, Linkages, Transitions and homeless assistance were maintained. However, state funding for other services and programs such as TANF and domestic violence services, did sustain significant cuts.

The NMCEH also worked on one bill and one memorial during the 2011 session. Senate Bill (SB) 177 would have allowed counties or municipalities to ask local voters to fund affordable housing through a small increase in property taxes. SB 177 passed its first committee but was then tabled in the Senate Finance Committee despite support from the Santa Fe Homebuilders Association, the Santa Fe Association of Realtors, Santa Fe County and the City of Santa Fe. House Joint Memorial (HJM) 22 asks the Governor to create an Interagency Council on Child Homelessness, and it passed both the House and Senate easily. HJM 22 was the top legislative priority for the NM Campaign to End Child Homelessness. The Campaign's next step will be to meet with the Governor and urge her to implement the recommendations in HJM 22.

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- *And public knowledge of real solutions*

Santa Fe County Commissioner Liz Stefanics (left) and Santa Fe Mayor David Coss presented Hank Hughes with the Affordable Housing Award

Hank Hughes receives Affordable Housing Champion Award

On March 11, 2011, at the Roundhouse, Santa Fe Mayor David Coss and the Santa Fe Affordable Housing Roundtable presented Hank Hughes of the New Mexico Coalition to End Homelessness with the Affordable Housing Champion Award. This award, sponsored by the City of Santa Fe and Enterprise Community Partners recognizes Hank's 20 year commitment and work in ending homelessness in New Mexico. In his thank you speech Hank acknowledged the many agencies and individuals associated with improving affordable housing in Santa Fe as well as the City and County's support and dedication. "We have come a long way" he said "but we have a long way to go to house everybody."

Our Sincere Gratitude Also Goes Out to These Individuals & Organizations

(continued from Page 2)

- **Senators Jerry Ortiz Y Pino** and **Mary Kay Papen** for co-sponsoring Senate Bill 177 which would have given local governments another option for funding affordable housing.

- **Representative Bill O'Neill** and **Senator John Ryan** for co-sponsoring House Joint memorial 22 which asks the Governor to create an Interagency Council on Child Homelessness.

- **Santa Fe Area Homebuilders Association** and the **Santa Fe Realtors Association** for their support for Affordable Housing in Santa Fe.

- **Albuquerque Mayor Richard Berry** and the **Albuquerque Department of Family and Community Services** for supporting the Albuquerque Heading Home Initiative.