

**United Way of Central New Mexico
2011-12 Community Fund Issue Area Grants
Program Stories**

Building Independence

Agency: A New Day, Inc.

Program: Life Skills Academy (LSA)

Client Story:

This year through the support of New Day a young man was able to find his way into our community in a positive way. Arriving at the New Day Safe Home after struggling with school, family life, and homelessness this young man received the support he needed to go from being homeless to a college freshman.

At age 6 family struggles began and self doubt and helplessness dictated this young boy's life. 10 years later at age 16 he left home and was homeless, sleeping on the streets. He became a high school dropout. His homelessness eventually brought him to New Day where a Wraparound team was developed and where he participated in the LSA learning valuable life skills.

Through this combination of support, encouragement and accountability he passed his GED (and scored in the top 90th percentile), became enrolled in CNM, and got a job at a local business.

He continues to flourish and succeed with the support of his team months after leaving New Day's Safe Home and Life Skills Academy.

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Assisting People with Disabilities

Agency: Abrazos Family Support Services Program

Program: Family Infant Toddler

Client Story:

Carter was referred to Abrazos when he was 6 months old because he could not hold his head up or sit, and had difficulty with drooling and eating. After an initial evaluation, a service plan was written and Carter received special instruction, physical, occupational and speech-language therapy. As a result of intervention, Carter was walking at 14 months, but continued to fall frequently. By 18 months, he had stopped drooling, but still had difficulty eating. He repeated words, but did not use words, gestures or eye contact to communicate. Because his development was not typical, he was referred for more comprehensive diagnostic tests at UNMH, though no cause for his difficulties was found. His mother followed through on all therapy recommendations and by three years of age, Carter's communication skills and physical motor skills had improved significantly and his attention span and play skills were age appropriate. He attends a home daycare and no longer needs special services.

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Assisting People with Disabilities

Agency: Adelante Development Center, Inc.

Program: Habilitation Program

Client Story:

When Sarah came to Adelante three years ago, she already had big plans for herself as either an artist or an actress but needed support to get her going. With the help of the Arts & Animals Habilitation Program, Sarah is gaining the skills she needs to make her plans a reality.

At Arts & Animals, Sarah trains dogs, an experience that has greatly improved her ability to take direction and allowed her to practice consistency, patience and communication skills at her own pace.

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Sarah also gets to showcase her performing arts skills. She is a talented actress, dancer, and singer, and at Arts & Animals she gets to be in front of an audience and work on her stage presence while gaining self confidence.

Sarah's involvement in Arts & Animals extends beyond these areas. With the aid of Adelante's staff, Sarah is getting job coaching so in the future she can be hired for a paid position and move toward financial independence. She has also learned about proper nutrition which has improved her focus and energy level.

With continued support and training, Sarah has a bright future whether as a Hollywood actress or in a veterinarian's office. She is being given the tools she needs to accomplish her goals.

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Strengthening Families

Agency: Advocacy, Inc.

Program: NM Guardianship Project

Client Story:

Maxine cares for six children under the age of twelve, each abandoned by her niece at birth. The fathers are incarcerated, unknown, uninvolved and provide no financial support. The eldest child is deaf, attending the NM School for the Deaf, the school age children are honor students, the young ones stay home and all are talented singers who perform with their church group. Despite Maxine's commitment, the mother has legal custody of the children. The transient mother, who has no interest in raising the children due to drug and mental health issues, still comes around. Legally, Maxine must allow the mother to visit and take the children even when they protest. Maxine came to Advocacy to seek a legal relationship that will ensure that she can prevent the mother or a father from taking one or all of the children at any time. A guardianship will give her access to housing, social security and Medicaid for the children and Maxine will be able to protect them from unsafe situations.

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Supporting Education

Agency: African American Cultural Association

Program: C. A. I. R.

Client Story:

I am writing with much thanksgiving, I cannot say enough about the CAIR center and its tutors. My son was in dire need of help. He was struggling academically, which, I believe, started a pattern of low self-esteem and under-achievement. Sometimes, I think the best help can come from those who are outside of our situation and can remain objective.

I had worked with my son and tried every familiar means to effect a positive change in his life; to no avail. I turned to The C.A.I.R. center as a last resort because I felt every other option had been exhausted. To my utter amazement, within weeks I began to see a turn-around in my son's behavior and academic performance. His reading and math scores dramatically improved and virtually every subject showed marked improvement.

Incredibly, I watched my child slowly emerge from his shell, and low-self-esteem and shyness seemed to just melt away!! I feel that I have a new Child, who is full of joy and confidence.

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I thank the staff and tutors of C.A.I.R. and I would recommend this program to any parent who is concerned about their children's academic and social future. Words will never sufficiently convey my gratitude!

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Promoting Healthy Lives

Agency: Albuquerque Speech, Language & Hearing **Program:** Voucher Fund

Client Story:

To whom it may Concern:

This is a letter of appreciation for the financial aid I received in order to purchase hearing aids. I knew that they are expensive, so I hesitated and procrastinated in investigating the possibility of purchase. Frequently I was reproached for asking people to repeat what they had said; I finally went for a hearing test. The Audiologist recommended your center so I made an appointment, knowing I did not have to purchase aids if I was not going to be able to afford them. It is not a myth that folks on a fixed income often have to make difficult choices, sometimes even about essentials. When I learned that there was a possibility of financial aid in paying for the hearing aids that were recommended, it was much easier for me to make a decision to get them.

I was told that United Way contributes to the financial aid offered. My appreciation goes out to all who make it a possibility to obtain hearing aids that would sometimes not be a possibility to fit into a tight budget.

Sincere thanks,
Paul Valley

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Assisting People with Disabilities

Agency: Alta Mira Specialized Family Services, Inc. **Program:** Early Childhood Intervention

Client Story:

Isabella was only 27 months old when she and her family received the diagnosis: Autism. She had a vocabulary of only two words when she was referred to Alta Mira for early intervention services. At the time, both Isabella and her family were experiencing high levels of frustration because of Isabella's inability to communicate in a way that her family could understand. The frustration was beginning to damage the family's relationship with Isabella. Alta Mira provided specialized instruction, speech therapy and regular visits by a developmental specialist. Isabella's communication began to blossom, her vocabulary increased and by the time she left Alta Mira a year later to attend a regular preschool, Isabella could often be heard using her favorite expression, "Let's go play!"

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Building Independence

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Agency: American Red Cross in New Mexico

Program: Disaster Services

Client Story:

Juan hired someone to eradicate ticks using a torch. The torch caught vines on fire which quickly spread to the mobile home totally destroying it. Juan, his wife and baby were in the home; other kids were at Grandma's. Juan sustained burns to his arm and face. The Red Cross provided the family hotel lodging for 3 nights, food for 6 and clothing for 2 immediately. The family's total annual income is less than \$10,000 with no insurance. Their furniture was rented and they were liable for \$1,700 to pay for it. For long term assistance they were referred to Catholic Social Services, ABQ Housing Authority and Legal Help Link. One month after the fire Red Cross Disaster Services contacted the family. They were living with the wife's mother and looking to find other accommodations but money remained a problem. Four months after the disaster the Red Cross was able to assist with first month's rent on an apartment for the family. In follow-up Juan's wife expressed "gratitude for outstanding service" by the Red Cross volunteers.

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Strengthening Families

Agency: Amigos Y Amigas

Program: Family Activity Center

Client Story:

An original staff member who remains with us today may very well be considered a success story. Because of a learning disability, this individual was having a difficult time obtaining gainful employment. Since her employment in a part-time capacity at Amigos Y Amigas, Inc., in 1991, she has raised two daughters and two granddaughters and cared for other relatives. She has experienced many family crises which did not interfere with her dedication to her job. She has remained a dedicated and loyal employee for almost 20 years. I believe her involvement at Amigos goes beyond her receiving a paycheck. She is a very positive individual and all program participants who know her struggles carry a deep admiration for her.

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Assisting People with Disabilities

Agency: ARCA

Program: Great Lives Program

Client Story:

Krista Swanson has myotonic muscular dystrophy and lives in a group home with two other individuals with developmental disabilities. Before finding ARCA's Health and Wellness Program Krista spent all of her time in a wheelchair watching TV. "I was like a kid," Krista says. "I whined and cried a lot." She also ate a lot of junk food and was overweight. Krista watched her mother and sister die of the disease and thought she would die of it too. "Now," she says, "I want to live for a long time." Through ARCA's Health and Wellness Program, Krista is in "her own place," and her general health and nutrition has improved. She uses a walker rather than a wheelchair and has become more independent. She still watches TV, but she also loves doing word search puzzles (she's the fastest in the house!) and going shopping. She takes voice lessons every Wednesday and has a recital in December. She is very excited about it and proudly intends to be the first to perform since it will be held at her house.

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Krista says the best part of ARCA is the nice people. "If I didn't have ARCA," she says, "I'd miss everybody I didn't know before." ARCA has provided her with excitement, enthusiasm, and the desire to get up and go.

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Promoting Healthy Lives

Agency: Asthma Allies
Program

Program: Home Visit Asthma Management

Client Story:

Patient was recently diagnosed with persistent asthma while hospitalized for asthma. Patient self-enrolled into the program and received education, tools, and an asthma action plan. Patient was given a journal to help identify symptoms and triggers for asthma. At the conclusion of the program, patient showed proficiency in using medications, was able to demonstrate use of an asthma action plan, and removed triggers from home. Number of days with symptoms decreased and spirometry showed minor improvement. Follow-up phone call found patient symptom free for over two weeks.

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Assisting People with Disabilities

Agency: Best Buddies New Mexico
Friendship Program

Program: Central New Mexico

Client Story:

The following was written by one of our Buddies and is presented unedited.
I am the official 2010 Homecoming King at Eldorado High School in Albuquerque, NM. My name is Abe Assaad, and I am a senior this year, and a Best Buddy.
There were about a hundred people trying out for homecoming court this year. I was proud to be picked by the senior class as a member of the court. Then, out of the members of the court, the whole school voted for who would be king and queen, and the first and second runners up, princes and princesses. At the Coronation Assembly, when my name was called, I was so happy, proud, and excited that my legs just buckled; I collapsed and fell down on the stage. I got up right away though, and the whole school, including students, parents, and teachers, were standing up clapping and yelling for me. It was great! The students and my friends respect hard work. The day before the dance, at the football game, the court was introduced at halftime. I had the chance to walk onto the field with the ladies of the court, and the queen. She is beautiful! The first and second place princes play on the football team, so it was great to walk out there with them, too. Eldorado won the game.
Go Eagles! After the Homecoming dance, I did a few television interviews, because I'm sort of a big deal now that I am king. I danced all night; I didn't sit down once. Even when my shoes hurt me, I didn't care. It was an all-around special day. The Homecoming Dance was on September 25, which was Eunice Kennedy Shriver Day. And I love Eldorado. I belong there.
The greatest part about being Homecoming King is feeling that sense of belonging.
My mom asked me what I think Mrs. Shriver would think about me being king. I don't know what she would think, but I want to thank her for helping me. I want to tell her that she didn't waste her time. I want her to know what a difference her work has made in my life.

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By Abe Assaad
Best Buddies Participant

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Supporting Education

Agency: Big Brothers Big Sisters of Central New Mexico

Program: Crossroads

Client Story:

Mi-Vida is one of our Little Sisters in the Crossroads program. Her Big Sister Jana tells her story: "Born to a teen mother, she has bounced around between family and foster care in many of her 14 years. Her father was not in her life, but was murdered in 2001. Her mother has been in and out of prison, leaving Mi-Vida to be raised by her ailing grandmother. She has witnessed drug addiction, abuse, and poverty in her family. My role as a Big Sister is simple: to support Mi-Vida, be the one adult in her life that she can always count on. I welcomed her baby brother home when her grandmother had to take custody of him after he was born in prison. She is also starting high school soon, and when she finishes, she will be the only member of her family with a high school diploma. Mi-Vida has now decided she wants to go to college, and I will be there cheering her on every step of the way. The Crossroads program has helped my relationship with Mi-Vida to become stronger and has helped us get to know other teen matches and has deepened Mi-Vida's connections to her community. Through Crossroads she has met other teens who plan to graduate from high school, reinforcing her own goal."

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Supporting Education

Agency: Blackout Theatre

Program: Blackout Education Program

Client Story:

Ericka Olvera was a freshman at the University of New Mexico when she joined a sketch show called Blackout Tonight Presents Dark Comedy. Blackout Tonight is a reoccurring sketch comedy/workshop show that takes students from UNM who have little to no experience writing, performing, or production work, and teaches them how to put together a show from scratch on their own. Blackout Tonight was Ericka's first show of her college acting career. She was intimidated at first because she did not have a lot of experience with improv or writing sketches. She says, "Blackout provided a comfortable environment for risk taking and learning." Since the Dark Comedy, Blackout has helped Ericka to continue to satisfy her curiosity of theatre. I took the adult long form improv classes last Spring and started an improv team with former cast mates. Her experience with Blackout has inspired her to pursue opportunities to learn more about sketch comedy and improv. Ericka feels like not only have the Blackout classes helped her gain confidence and given her tools to creatively express herself, but she has garnered many friends who she continues to collaborate with.

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Supporting Education

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Agency: Boys & Girls Club of Albuquerque & Rio Rancho

Program: Education Development & Mentoring

Client Story:

At the age of 5, Illiana started attending the club. She lives with her grandmother having been abandoned by her drug-addicted parents. Illiana is now 12, and has been a member for 7 years. Illiana was initially a shy child, and would not engage or trust people. Illiana participates daily in our Powerhour homework & education programs. To improve her self-esteem and provide additional mentorship, we started her in our junior staff program which partners a child one-on-one with a staff member and allows them to assist with the program and mentor younger children. While she still struggles with abandonment issues, she has done so well in school that her grandmother has enrolled her in P.A.P.A. school focusing on theater arts. Illiana's statement: I have enjoyed coming to this club for 7 years now and I still enjoy it. I like the club because I can talk to staff about anything and not be uncomfortable. I am able to get my feelings out so they do not interfere with my school work.

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Supporting Education

Agency: Boys & Girls Club of Valencia County

Program: After-School Program

Client Story:

Eric, age 7 and Damian, age 5 are brothers, enrolled in Boys & Girls Club of Valencia County. Eric, introverted and painfully shy, did not care about making friends. Damian cried, threw fits, and ran away from the staff. As time passed, the site director found out from Eric that their father had died earlier that year from a gunshot wound. Eric felt a lot of pain and anger and that it was unfair. Their mother, strained from the pain of losing the boys dad, dealing with the media, the trial, and raising her children alone, enrolled the boys in the Club, even though they were not interested in joining. Three months later, Damian, always smiling, runs after the other kids and loves to be hugged. He is beginning to read. Eric still misses his dad, but has friends and always asks to be a helper. He was also chosen to be in the schools Loyal & True Band. The staff is excited to see such a positive change in these boys, whose fears and struggles have been overcome by their accomplishments.

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Promoting Healthy Lives

Agency: Cancer Services of New Mexico

Program: Promoting Healthy Lives

Client Story:

Dorina's life has never been easy. A single mother of three, including a son with special needs, she's long prided herself in caring for her family, working the past nine years as a maid for a large Albuquerque hotel. Their lives were rocked when the lumps behind her ears came with a terminal cancer diagnosis. Shortly after Dorina started treatment a friend told her about the Family Cancer Retreat. With limited finances, she was excited to learn there was no charge to attend and Cancer Services could even help cover her family's transportation costs to Glorieta. During the weekend Dorina, her sisters, and son spent time learning about many aspects of coping with cancer. It was a very meaningful time for the family, who came away with a stronger bond and commitment to navigating this journey together. As Dorina said, "I had a great time at the Retreat. I had

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fun hanging out with my sisters and it helped us, talking about my cancer and what the future holds for each of us.”

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Promoting Healthy Lives

Agency: People Living Through Cancer

Program: Cancer Support Services

Client Story:

In 2008, a small boil initiated Danielle’s “cancer nightmare”. Danielle is a young wife and mother of two and was referred to PLTC in 2009. After months of attempts at diagnosis, Danielle was told that she had severe Neuroendocrine Metastatic Carcinoid Cancer throughout her body. She was in her hospital room after receiving this news, alone and scared particularly upon learning that there was no treatment for her cancer, only pain management. Today, a year later after her first meeting, Danielle is a faithful and valued member of PLTC’s Advanced Cancer Support Group, her courage and authenticity are a model for all of us.

In her words; “This has been quite a journey, not a death sentence. I have made many beautiful new friends through this path. My goal is to encourage people to just be friendlier and love each other a little more in life. What is important is to take a look at what is truly important in life. People Living Through Cancer has helped me realize that whenever you need someone to listen... they understand and are there for you because they have shared your experience. I encourage you to support PLTC because they have not only touched my life but the lives of thousands”.

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Promoting Healthy Lives

Agency: Casa Esperanza

Program: Guest & Navigation Services

Client Story:

When first diagnosed with Stage 1 cancer, Valerie recalls “freaking out” with concern over the expense. Valerie’s husband, Jack, was diagnosed with Stage 3 cancer within that same week. As caregivers for each other, they faced scheduling issues as both needed various tests and treatments that relied on them having an available caregiver. Staying at Casa Esperanza minimized the expense and travel time. Valerie shared with us that she wouldn’t have been able to get through treatment if they had to drive from Torrance County into Albuquerque each day on top of everything else. They live fairly close but with daily treatment, it’s far. After one year cancer free, Jack was diagnosed with a new unrelated cancer but fortunately caught it early and sailed through treatment. He attributes his successful outcome to Casa Esperanza and the benefit of the location, the services, amenities and the support of staff and friends.

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Supporting Education

Agency: Catholic Charities

Program: Children's Learning Center

Client Story:

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Oscar's grandmother brought him to our center when he was 16 months old. He was born to a crack-addicted mother and suffered developmental difficulties as a result. When he arrived, Oscar was emotionally breakable. He kept away from other children and cried excessively when his grandmother dropped him off. He would cry if anyone new entered a room, and held himself away from the others. The teachers worked closely with Oscar, gently guiding him to activities and allowing him the freedom to be alone, but always encouraging him to participate. At first, the going was very slow, as Oscar continued to resist other people and participation. Then he began to slowly make guarded friendships, and gradually began to take part in activities. Transitioning to next level classes as he grew older was very difficult, and the changes brought out some of his previous behaviors. However, after some gentle work by his new teachers, he began to play and participate and when he transitioned to the 4 and 5 year old class, he made the transition with relative ease. Today Oscar is improving in all developmental areas. He is bilingual, shares with his friends, follows directions and laughs often.

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Assisting People with Disabilities

Agency: Cerebral Palsy Parents Association
Independence

Program: Assistive Equipment to Enhance

Client Story:

A family of 4 in Moriarty, NM has a teenage daughter with severe cerebral palsy and is growing. Her mother is mobile, however her petite build makes it difficult for her to lift her daughter for personal care and hygiene. The father has to work to take care of the family expenses and they needed a track lift system in their home so that the mother can take her child from room to room and also help her in the bathroom. The family is on the waiting list for the Developmental Disability waiver (DD waiver has a ten year waiting list) and will not be able to qualify for services for the next 7 years. The family was able to get some assistance through their insurance which covered about \$1500 for the track system. The Independent Living Research Center (ILRC) could put \$3000 towards the track system. The Carrie Tingley Foundation(CTF) could contribute about \$2000, NM Technology Assistance Program was able to contribute \$600 and the family was able to raise \$1000. The family was short \$600 for the completion of the system. The CPPA was able to assist with using the UWCNM funds. In addition to enhancing her independence, family members have been able to participate in her care without physical strain to themselves.

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Strengthening Families

Agency: Children's Grief Center of New Mexico

Program: Children's Grief Support

Client Story:

Adam and Dominic attended CGC several years ago, after the death of Adam's wife and Dominic's mother, Gabriella. Recently, Adam wrote to the Grief Center and shared some poignant reflections about what CGC means to him and Dominic.

"I know that speaking with his peers helped Dominic to deal with his grief. It gave him coping skills that he just could not have acquired in any other manner," Adam said. "I truly feel that without the Grief Center Dominic would be a very different person today. Losing a loved one can affect someone from loving again in the future. The grief blocks the potential love we can feel. CGC gave Dominic a place to express himself to those who could truly understand. Thanks to the Grief Center, Dominic has more

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freedom with how he deals with life and love for the past, present and future. The Children's Grief Center isn't just a place, it's a way of giving life back to those that attend." •

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Supporting Education

Agency: Christina Kent Early Childhood Center
Childhood Center

Program: Christina Kent Early

Client Story:

Mom is a single parent and works full time with two children ages 5 and 3. When the family enrolled in our program, mom qualified for State Tuition Assistance, Food Stamps, WIC, etc. A few months ago, she received a 40 cent raise at her job. For most people, a raise would be welcomed. However, for this mother, it was not. It was just enough to disqualify her from the assistance programs she was utilizing. She had to pay tuition for both children and no longer received any help with food. Mom came to me in tears because her children didn't get any food after they left our program for the day; they weren't eating anything else until they came back to school the next morning. If CK didn't exist, this mother would have to take her children out of childcare due to the expense or the children would be placed in less than adequate care. CK was able to provide the mother with partial tuition assistance. We were also able to provide her with free food by collaborating with the Roadrunner Food Bank.

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Supporting Education

Agency: Citizen Schools

Program: Citizen Schools

Client Story:

Maria, a 7th grader at Van Buren Middle School, is in her second year at Citizen Schools. She has made strong gains academically, improving her grades from C's last year to B's and A's this year. Her greatest accomplishment has been raising her Language Arts grade from a C last year to an A this year. She has also been proactive in seeking help with extra tutoring in math. When asked what her favorite part of Citizen Schools was Maria responded "apprenticeships." This semester, Maria is participating in "Our Food Our Stories" and "Hands-On Banking" apprenticeships. She said, "I have learned to write different elements of a story and how to write recipes." In Hands-On Banking taught by Wells Fargo volunteers, Maria has been excited to learn the concepts of saving money. Maria's mother, Lauri, has shared with us that Citizen Schools has brought their relationship closer and she is very appreciative of the homework help Maria's receive, "because I can't always help her with it." Lauri has also noticed an improvement in Maria's confidence and oral presentation skills. Maria shared that she doesn't get nervous speaking in front of people and that she speaks "louder and more clearly."

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Building Independence

Agency: CNM Foundation

Program: Adult and General Education

Client Story:

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Phil Brito is a native New Mexican, born and raised in Santa Fe. In his words, “Both English and Spanish were spoken at home, though my grandparents only spoke Spanish. My problems began in high school when I started getting in trouble all the time. I turned to drugs and was an addict for 27 years. I finally got help, and then moved to Albuquerque, where I lived in transitional housing. The folks there recommended that I come to CNM, so twenty years after I dropped out of school, I started again. It was the spring of 2009. This program changed my life. From the time I entered the school, teachers, [achievement] coaches, and everyone encouraged me. The classes were free! I didn't think it was possible. I took my GED test in July of 2009, and I graduated with honors...Now I'm taking college courses. I'm studying Digital Media, working towards an associate degree. For the future, I'm looking into the production end of the business—films, videos, and computer.”

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Assisting People with Disabilities

Agency: Cornucopia, Inc.
Services

Program: Cornucopia Adult Day

Client Story:

John G. is a native of the South Valley who currently receives services at Cornucopia. As a child John was born with a Developmental Delay. Unfortunately an automobile also hit him. As a child he was in special educational programs, however his natural family was not a stable environment. Therefore, John slipped through the cracks, into hard drinking/drug abuse.

By the time John came to Cornucopia he was clean and sober, yet suffered at the young age of 36 of cirrhosis of the liver, Hepatitis C, and diabetes. Without the natural support system of his biological family John almost died from lack of care when not at Cornucopia. Therefore, immediate intervention by our agency was necessary. I personally took John to the Urgent Care to file a report of abuse. He was then transported to a safe nursing home, where they have been able to stabilize his condition.

Had it not been for the United Way Emergency Transition Funding provided by the Community Fund through United Way, we would have been unable to provide him with clothing, shampoo, deodorant, and other basic necessities we all take for granted.

We look forward to the day John is well enough to return to his day program at Cornucopia, which he refers to as "his school".

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Building Independence

Agency: Crossroads for Women

Program: Day Program

Client Story:

SC had her first son at age 21, her second at 29. She was sober when pregnant but drank heavily after each. After her 2nd, SC had a stroke. For care, she returned w/ her boys to the Santo Domingo home she spent her childhood trying to escape. SC's healing was stunted by more emotional and physical abuse, this time also directed at her sons. SC says, “I gave up on healing. It's an embarrassment to me. I was tired of the abuse and felt helpless. I didn't want to live.” Now homeless, one son went to live w/ grandparents- SC and her 4 yr old came to Albuquerque and drifted from shelter to shelter until, just

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before Christmas 2007, SC joined Crossroads. She says, "I never had a chance to concentrate on myself. The day I entered Crossroads was the beginning of my chance."

Sober for over 2 yrs, SC's maintained stable housing and worked diligently with her Crossroad's case manager, counselor and family specialist to learn how to cope, heal, and parent without violence. She received an award for "Most Dedicated Parent" from her son's school. SC says, "I can't believe I've had 2 years of the healing process. A relative told me that no matter where I went nobody would accept me. Crossroads proved him wrong."

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Supporting Education

Agency: Cuidando Los Ninos, Inc.
for Homeless Children

Program: Building Successful Futures

Client Story:

My name is Corley and I am a single father. My family's life was very difficult to manage before we got involved with Cuidando Los Ninos. I found it hard to stay a step ahead with child care and the other necessities we needed. We moved from place to place and eventually ended up living in my car. It was very unstable and particularly tough on the young children. That's the hardest part, my two kids are affected and they do not understand what is happening and why the family is struggling.

I was referred to Cuidando by St. Martin's Church. The day I got the number, I called and I immediately started receiving help. The CLN Family Resource Specialists were great to talk with and set up an interview that same day. It was encouraging to have CLN respond so quickly to my immediate needs. Just knowing there was specific help was a great relief.

I've been getting child care and help with other small needs. We got jackets for the kids and even for myself, so necessary for this Winter. At day care, the kids get fed a couple of times a day, and this is such a relief that they are getting good nutrition.

I was connected to Catholic Charities for housing, along with daily support. I've even learned some things in the parenting class which have been very helpful! Due to Cuidando Los Ninos, things have been a lot easier to manage. I've gotten a job and I've been able to keep that job. It's great to know the kids are safe and being well cared for. They seem healthier and the amazing things they learn in preschool classes! In my life, things are coming along whether I expect them or not. Having this program just takes the struggle out of a lot of things. Cuidando is a very good place.

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Building Independence

Agency: Dismas House New Mexico, Inc.
Reentry Project

Program: Dismas Houe New Mexico

Client Story:

Those We Serve . . .

"Before I went to jail, I had a job, and a nice place to call home. It went wrong one night. I ended up in incarceration due to alcohol, anger, and a bad call. I was hurtful, and just downright mean. I will pay for the actions of that night for the rest of my life.

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When I came out, I was at a very low point in my self-esteem. When you're fresh out, you're completely vulnerable. Then I arrived at Dismas House, and I was welcomed with respect, warmth, and a spirit of love. If it were not for Dismas House, I would have been completely lost going from the inside to the outside.

My experience at Dismas House has shown me that I'm a worthwhile person, and that I can have a life that is fully part of the community. The service Dismas provides the community is invaluable. The Staff is always available to lend an ear, and they have taught me patience and the ability to look at a problem from a different angle.

The Dismas House program lets us regain our freedom, but we still have rules. We have a curfew, and we attend AA and NA meetings. At least twice weekly, community and church groups share meals with the residents. But it's not just a meal: It's an interaction between groups that makes it fun for all parties. Our guests know our past, and they treat us with compassion and respect. Sometimes the conversation lasts for hours. Sharing my story has been beneficial to me."

—Eric, a Resident of Dismas House

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Preventing Family Violence

Agency: Enlace Comunitario

Program: Domestic Violence

Client Story:

Juanita Gallegos, an immigrant from Mexico, came to EC in April 2006, after recently leaving a physically and psychologically abusive relationship. Juanita had moved to the United States with her boyfriend who had promised her a better life for her and her children. Soon after the move, her boyfriend became increasingly controlling and abusive and used his citizenship status to maintain control over her. Isolated from her family and friends in Mexico, and having been in the United States for only one year, she felt like she had nobody to turn to. Juanita describes feeling as if she was "worth less than the piece of paper on the floor." At Enlace, Juanita received case management assistance to secure transitional housing, legal services to receive an order of protection, and individual and group counseling for herself and her daughters. At first Juanita stated that she didn't feel she had the right to speak, "I found my voice, and then I couldn't stop talking". At Enlace Juanita made friends with the other women in the group and she credits many of them with taking her under their wing, providing mentorship, emotional support and friendship. She points to a pivotal time when her Enlace friends gave her a make-over helping her to feel that her outward appearance matched her newly gained self-esteem. Juanita also took English as a Second Language classes at Enlace and she became a Promotora, a peer educator, to work against domestic violence and to motivate other victims to find their voice. Today Juanita is an Enlace Comunitario board of director member and she has worked hard fundraising for the organization. She is also a proud grandmother of five, is gainfully employed, and she owns her own trailer. In her words, "Querer es poder".

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Sheltering Neighbors

Agency: Family Promise of Albuquerque

Program: Interfaith Hospitality Network of Albuquerque

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Client Story:

Roma, desperate for help and craving a better life for her 3-year old son Isaiah and her unborn child, picked up the phone one day and called IHN. Broke and distressed, she found herself in a precarious situation after the children's father lost his job. The family had been evicted from their apartment, and Roma and the father had separated. Though uncertain about staying in a shelter, Roma and Isaiah entered the IHN program. She leaned on IHN staff and volunteers to provide needed shelter, food, transportation, and to boost her self-confidence. Roma worked with IHN staff to secure aid such as TANF and food stamps. IHN staff worked with Cuidando Los Ninos to enroll Isaiah in daycare. While at IHN, Roma took the GED placement exam, enrolled in a parenting class and completed an internship as a medical assistant. Roma was accepted into a Barrett Housing Program, and with move-in help from IHN volunteers she is now thriving in her apartment with her two children. When she meets with IHN staff now, Roma says she wants to give back to IHN because it gave her the hope and support she needed at a difficult time. Now she looks forward to the future.

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Building Independence

Agency: Goodwill Industries of New Mexico

Program: Pathways to Self-Sufficiency

Client Story:

Ronald E. couldn't find work because he has a felony DUI and was homeless. He was also clean and sober. He came to Goodwill where he met with a Pathways job developer for an assessment of job skills and goals. He had worked for a garage door manufacturer in Illinois and wanted to open his own business. In the case of ex-offenders, GINM provides interview skills so that the individual can more honestly respond to the questions that are inevitably asked about their criminal history. The job developer sent Ronald on several job leads but his felony history made it difficult to land a job. Eventually, he was hired by Goodwill's Transportation Department, driving a truck. He saved his income and moved into an apartment, and eventually bought a used truck. His next step was to realize his dream of opening his own business. With his background in the garage door industry, he began networking for work installing garage doors. He obtained a business license and printed business cards. His emphasis on quality work, together with customers' word-of-mouth, has resulted in his having a steady stream of orders.

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Strengthening Families

Agency: Great Southwest Council Boy Scouts of America
Diversion

Program: ScOutreach Juvenile

Client Story:

We first met "Krystal" at Bernalillo County Teen Court after she had been caught shoplifting. At first untrusting and hesitant to speak, Krystal soon realized that we were creating a safe space and she began to contribute ideas to our discussions. Within weeks, Krystal became an instrumental communicator, taking the initiative to problem-solve with her peers during a ropes course program that the Scouts use to develop confidence and teamwork skills.

While Krystal continues to struggle with an unstable family living situation, the individualized case management provided by the ScOutreach JD program allows Krystal and her parents to discuss potential options, resources for youth advocacy, and academic support. The resolve Krystal demonstrates to use her

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life circumstances and experiences as sources of strength and catalyst for change are inspiring. We are proud to support her personal growth and self-directed development through her involvement in the ScOutreach Juvenile Diversion Program.

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Preventing Family Violence

Agency: Haven House, Inc.
for Adults and Children

Program: Domestic Violence Services

Client Story:

A young woman with two children--a toddler and one a bit older--came in to our shelter. She was fairly certain she was leaving her abuser for good but very unsure how to move on. Our children's staff worked with her and her children to help her handle some negative effects on the children that had come from witnessing abuse.

Our case management staff worked diligently with this woman on her goals, helped her clarify some realistic ones, come up with a plan for moving on to a healthy life, and provided different sorts of help to her in achieving her goals.

One of her barriers was that she had not graduated from high school; however, she had a trade in mind that she had been interested in learning. Staff helped her find the confidence to take her GED exam (she was very nervous about doing this) and research what was involved in enrolling in the trade school in which she was interested. Despite low moments, this client learned to trust her own ability to research, study, and "go for" what she wanted. Meantime, staff provided her with DV education and her children with care during the times she needed to spend working on her own goals. This client obtained her GED and today is succeeding in a solid transitional housing program and in school. Her children are well adjusted, and the client comes back to our facility to visit occasionally and let us know how she is doing.

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Strengthening Families

Agency: Hogares, Inc.
Community Support

Program: Building Strong Families through

Client Story:

Cristina B. was in an abusive and violent marriage, with 2 small children. She spoke limited English, and was isolated and alone. Angel, then 7 years old, was diagnosed with autism. Cristina came to Hogares for help with Angel, but the staff quickly surmised that Angels problems were intensified by the home environment. After one particularly violent episode, the CCSS worker helped Cristina identify neighbors who might be a safety resource for her. The neighbors were contacted, and became part of Cristina's crisis safety plan. One neighbor, who also had an autistic child, taught Cristina techniques to help sooth Angel, who has limited communications skills. That neighbor is now a friend and community support for Cristina and her children. The CCSS also enlisted Angel's teacher to teach Cristina skills to deal with Angel's tantrums, which the CCSS then modeled and practiced with Cristina. Today, Cristina is divorced and speaks English more confidently. She has completed a GED and is enrolled at CNM. Angel is doing better, too. Through CCSS, Cristina has a solid network of community supports and she has learned the skills to manage Angels autism on her own.

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Supporting Education

Agency: Jewish Community Center of Greater Albuquerque **Program:** JCC Title I Afterschool Program

Client Story:

Jelisa Dandridge, age 12, is a seventh grader at Kennedy Middle School, and has participated in the JCC's Title One Afterschool Health, Fitness and Nutrition Program for two years. When Jelisa first started the program as a sixth grader in 2009/2010, she had little or no education in regards to health and nutrition. For Jelisa, fitness and proper nutrition was not emphasized as important, and, therefore, she experienced various health issues. After participating in the program, Jelisa not only learned the importance of proper nutrition and food choices, but she also learned how to enjoy exercise. Jelisa was able to improve her Presidential Fitness Testing scores, and is now amongst the top 5 in her school in testing. She is determined to do even better this year.

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Serving Our Seniors

Agency: Jewish Family Service of New Mexico **Program:** Seniors Aging Well at Home

Client Story:

Betty (BJ) is a seventy-nine year old unmarried woman who lives by herself in a mobile home in Albuquerque. She has a host of physical ailments including: Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease (COPD) and requires oxygen 24 hours/7 days a week, severe debilitating arthritis in her knees, diabetes, cataracts, osteoporosis, and heart disease (she has a pacemaker and a stint in her heart). She doesn't drive and doesn't have any local family supports. She loves her home and wishes to maintain her independent living for as long as possible. Through JFS' Seniors Aging Well at Home Program, BJ has been connected with many supportive services through case managers that have been instrumental to her being able to live independently including: home-delivered meals seven days per week (her only meal each day) and a supplemental home-delivered food box from JFS' food pantry each month; homemaker services that come three hours/week to help her care for herself and do chores around the house; transportation to her medical appointments from the JFS Senior Transportation Project; arranging for seasonal service of her swamp cooler; securing a raised toilet seat, and bedside commode; and assistance with paying her utilities. BJ has very low income and has considerable difficulties with activities of daily living because of her many health problems. The assistance she is provided through the Program allows her to remain living independently and connected to the community. When asked about the help she receives from her case manager and homemaker she states "I couldn't do it without them"

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Building Independence

Agency: Junior Achievement of New Mexico **Program:** Hispanic Initiative

Client Story:

Preshess Jones has participated in JA activities and says that JA has given her the opportunity to be able to speak to kids and address them on a different level. In an interview conducted with her in February 2010, she clearly articulated that JA has made an impact on her life. She was a senior at Creative

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Education Preparatory Institute when she took part in JA Job Shadow. She says JA Job Shadow is a day of learning and a time to dive into careers and learn about them. She visited places that she might not necessarily want to work, but she says, "It's nice to see what the corporate world looks like." She encourages other kids who participate in JA Job Shadow to be open-minded, and says, "There are a lot of people out there who want you to succeed." JA has helped Preshess to think about her future and what she wants to achieve.

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Supporting Education

Agency: Keshet Dance Company

Program: Mentorship through Dance

Client Story:

At age 12, Indie C. was incarcerated for murder and sentenced until age 21 at YDDC. Upon arrival, she enrolled in Keshet's program and at age 17 was granted early release. While incarcerated, Indie spent nearly 1000 hours with Keshet mentors. Since joining the Post Release program in June 2008, she has spent over 600 hours working with Keshet, reintegrating into the world beyond incarceration. With the support of her Keshet mentors she applied for an was accepted into nursing school, has secured her own apartment and full time job and was invited to Washington, DC to accept an award from First Lady Michelle Obama acknowledging her accomplishments and the success of the YDDC program as whole. Indie states, "Keshet has stayed involved in my life while every other program came in for a month or two and left without a warning. No matter what, they were there for me. Keshet is like a family that a lot of kids in jail never had. They accept you and love you however you are."

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Assisting People with Disabilities

Agency: La Vida Felicidad, Inc.

Program: Early Intervention Program

Client Story:

During my pregnancy I was told there was a problem with the baby's heart. After my son's birth he was placed in an induced coma following his surgery and was diagnosed with DiGeorge Syndrome (a genetic chromosomal disorder). I was told he could remain a vegetable. I never imagined him playing, running, or laughing. When he was strong enough he was released and came home with a g-tube, oxygen, ventilator and c-pap machine. He was tiny and fragile. His machines, feeding and medication were hard to manage. La Vida managed his developmental growth and came in ready to do anything to get him involved. My son now plays with others; he loves puzzles, books, markers, constructing items, riding a tricycle-anything a child of his age enjoys. With help he learned to bear weight on his feet. He started cruising, walking, running and jumping. La Vida therapists made sure he could move around despite the confines of his tubes and machines. He is less dependent on oxygen and is off the ventilator.

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Strengthening Families

Agency: Legal FACS

Program: Family Legal Assistance

Client Story:

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Ms. A is the mother of 3 children. The father of the children filed a bogus Petition for Order of Protection against Ms. A and was given temporary custody of the children until the Court had an opportunity to determine whether his claims were meritorious. The father did not show up at the hearing. Instead, he disenrolled the children from school and left New Mexico without telling Ms. A where he was going. Legal FACS helped Ms. A file an emergency motion for the return of her children and an attorney advised her on how to prepare for the hearing. The Court granted Ms. A's motion, but Ms. A still did not know where her children were. Legal FACS helped her subpoena documents from a government agency that knew the location of the father. After being separated from her children for four months, Ms. A discovered the location of her children and was able to bring them back to New Mexico.

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Strengthening Families

Agency: Love, INC of South Albuquerque

Program: Ayudando Familias

Client Story:

For 5 years Care Net Pregnancy Centers operated one of their 5 Albuquerque offices out of this South Valley location. They asked us to take over the mentoring aspect of their program. We are building a trust with their former clients but are beginning to attract new families as well. This is the story of one of our Spanish clients:

My name is Veronica, and I want to share the benefits that I had in the program Ayudando Familias. I knew about the program in my church. I went there to see how it works, and then I started to take classes. I learn a lots of things about how take care of my first baby. For me learn how to put my baby in his crib was very important, because if you don't know how your baby could died. And also they pay me (vouchers) for taking the classes, and with that money I bought diapers, baby clothes and clothes for me. God bless Love INC and I recommend this program to all people, even men, because they also can take classes and learn.

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Supporting Education

Agency: Manzano Mountain Early Learning Center

Program: Manzano Mountain Early Learning Center

Client Story:

One client has 3 children. Both parents have jobs. After moving to the East Mtns, they lived with a relative until they could get a place of their own. Their jobs are in ABQ, so ABQ would be closer for them to live and work. However, they put their children in our center as well as one of their children in the public school in Tijeras. They found a place to live in ABQ, but have kept their children at our center because they feel their children are safe and well-cared for. This makes a very long commute for them each day. They are one of the families caught in the decrease of state funding from 200-100% of poverty level. Now they are being charged for 3 children at the rate of over \$1000 per month. We are trying to find the money to help them (we don't have enough UW money to offer) but now our center funding from the state has also been cut by 10%. This is close to an impossible situation for all of us. Can you help? Any money beyond what the UW is currently granting us will first be given to this family.

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Strengthening Families

Agency: March of Dimes
Family Support

Program: March of Dimes NICU

Client Story:

Heather and John never thought they would end up in the NICU. Heather had a placental abruption and Winston had to be delivered as soon as possible. Winston was not breathing and had to be resuscitated for 10 minutes. He was given a surfactant injection which was founded by March of Dimes researchers. Surfactant allows a premature baby to breathe properly. Winston was taken to the NICU immediately and Heather was told that Winston suffered brain damage due to lack of oxygen in the brain. She was told he would be confined to a wheelchair for the rest of his life. He was also suffering from violent seizures. Winston was in the NICU for a week and it was the longest week that Heather had ever experienced. Heather wanted every memory of the NICU to be just that-a memory. Winston is a healthy toddler now and Heather decided that she wanted to give back and became a volunteer for the March of Dimes. She is very grateful for all the accomplishments of the March of Dimes and for the NICU Family Support Project.

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Serving Our Seniors

Agency: Meals on Wheels of Albuquerque
Program

Program: Low Income Medical Meal

Client Story:

Life has a funny way of coming around full circle. Barbara had no idea when she was volunteering at a Meals on Wheels in South Carolina that a few years later she would be a client of Meals on Wheels in Albuquerque.

Barbara and her daughter were in a terrible and tragic automobile accident and the two of them were left with serious injuries that they will never recover from. Barbara was in a coma for six months, and her daughter lives in a nursing home on the east coast.

Following a slow and painful recovery Barbara fell in love with the Southwest during a visit, and has lived here ever since.

Barbara battles a variety of illnesses, physical, speech and memory problems, and has recently been diagnosed with diabetes. Although she had been on our program since 2004, following her diagnosis we switched her to a diabetic diet. When she began receiving our diabetic meals she was 237 pounds but with our help she is a svelte 175 pounds today.

Because she lives alone she looks forward to her daily visits with our volunteers, and they in turn spend time making sure she is happy and safe. She calls us often to tell us how grateful she is to our Chefs and staff who take the time to "put so much love in her meals".

This brave woman with a remarkable story is why we do what we do at Meals on Wheels.

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Supporting Education

Agency: Menaul School

Program: Panther Camp@Menaul

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Client Story:

When Haleigh came to Panther Camp she was very shy and reserved. Being small for her age didn't help matters. By the end of Panther Camp, Haleigh was one of our most vocal and expressive campers. She led numerous group activities and made presentations to both campers and parents during the final weeks of camp. We hope to have Haleigh back this year as a junior counselor.

Why the change? Haleigh's mother shares the following: "Haleigh and Grace loved every minute of camp! As a parent I appreciated the service projects and the Bible teachings. I also appreciated the variety of indoor/outdoor activities. It was a wonderful mix! My girls came home daily and told us about what they learned or how to make various projects. They enjoyed all of the field trips and the weekly Friday afternoon presentations to the parents gave Haleigh the confidence to speak in front of people that she had been lacking.

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Building Independence

Agency: Move the Mountain

Program: Circles Campaign

Client Story:

At 25, Ashlee is mother of 3. She and her husband experienced economic prosperity and unstable struggles. Her husband earned a good income but lost his job, Ashlee was pregnant and they moved in with extended family.

Her mother heard about Getting Ahead classes. There, each person reflected on their own situation and worked as a group to explore concepts about poverty and why they were struggling. Ashlee learned the importance of setting long-term goals instead of being in the tyranny of the moment that poverty can perpetuate. She began to see poverty differently and was less judgmental about others who were also working very hard to get ahead. After Ashlee graduated from the class, she joined Circles, where she experienced the value of connecting with others and the impact that she can have on her community. Since joining Circles, Ashlee's family has their own home. She has a good job that allowed her to open a bank account and meet the family's expenses. She'll be graduating soon with her Bachelors degree. Ashlee was inspired by her own experience and is co-facilitating Getting Ahead classes. She loves the fact that she is helping others to learn to see things in a different way.

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Promoting Healthy Lives

Agency: Nacimientto Community Foundation

Program: Healthy Communities Program

Client Story:

This family first accessed NCF's programs in 2006; 2 adults and 4 children. They were assisted on past due rent, a food voucher and enrolled in NCF's Food Pantry due to lack of income. NCF provided case management by helping complete and submit applications for NM Low Income Home Energy Program, Heat NM and Medicaid enrollment and recertification. In Oct 2010, the working spouse was laid off her job. Due to her emergency, she qualified for assistance on rent, utilities and emergency food. In 2010, the family participated in gardening at NCF's Cuba Community Garden and also volunteered numerous hours

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pulling weeds and clean-up. They learned to cook the vegetables they grew and loved them. Mom stated it was the first time they had ever cooked and eaten their own vegetables. They have signed up for the next growing season! The family also participated in a hike on the Fisher Trail with NCF's Healthy Communities Coordinator.

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Supporting Education

Agency: National Dance Institute of New Mexico
School and Advanced Programs

Program: Albuquerque & Cuba In-

Client Story:

Diagnosed with cerebral palsy at 4 months old, Rand has depended on her adopted family's love and her own determination to help her overcome many motor and speech challenges. Rand began dancing in NDI-NM's In-School Program, and was accepted to our 2010 Summer Institute and 2010-2011 Super Wonderful Advanced Team. With enthusiasm and will, she practices at home for hours. "Rand's motivation to excel is directly linked to her NDI-NM experience," her grandmother says. "She knows that if she works hard, she can learn like any other student. She leads a healthy lifestyle so her body will be strong. NDI has so impacted Rand's self-esteem that she feels more like her typically developing peers. She sees herself as a dancer – strong and competent. With her indomitable spirit and NDI's influence, we know that Rand will meet her goals. She hopes someday to be an NDI teacher, but what is most important is that she will formulate a future defined by hard work and excellence. Her dreams are a gift from NDI."

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Assisting People with Disabilities

Agency: Native American Professional Parent Resources

Program: Early Intervention Program

Client Story:

HY was born 3 months early weighing 1 pound 12 ounces and was referred at age 8 months by the Neonatal Intensive Care Unit at UNM. Due to HY's premature birth he was already experiencing multiple developmental delays in several areas. HY was not able to crawl, walk, or communicate his needs. Due to the UWCNM grant that allowed flexibility in staff caseloads, HY received immediate attention and a quick assessment. The IFSP was quickly developed with intensive services for HY, due to financial support provided by the UW grant. Also, specialized training made possible by the same grant allowed the EI team to find ways to support HY's emotional development with his family and brother. Against all odds, within his first year of service, HY was able to communicate his needs and began to crawl and walk. His mom says she is thankful for EI services because HY is now healthy and strong.

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Building Independence

Agency: New Mexico Project for Financial Literacy

Program: Financial Education for IDA's

Client Story:

When Victoria Belleau was diagnosed with colon cancer in 2009, she and her son Vince Gnodle lived in the housing projects of Bernalillo. At age 19, Vince used his IDA savings to purchase a house for himself

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and his mother, after completing a 10-session financial education course. "It has made me mature a lot," says Vince of his experience. With his mother unable to work, the task of saving was left primarily to Vince. "He's had a good attitude. He hasn't given up; he has a goal and he's going to get there," says Victoria. "He's become more mature both financially and emotionally." Not only has Vince become a saver, he has become accustomed to such tasks as helping to administer his mother's shots, and fixing up their home. Additionally, Vince holds a job and on weekends volunteers at the fire department to prepare for his intended career as firefighter once he turns 21. When asked his current age Vince says that he will be twenty next week. "Twenty going on forty," adds his mother.

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Assisting People with Disabilities

Agency: NewLife Homes
Special Needs

Program: Serving Homeless with

Client Story:

I have been living at Kentucky Manor for over 10 years. My life was in turmoil when the option of living here was presented to me by my case manager. I had been in and out of hospitals. A psychiatrist finally was able to stabilize me through medications and I no longer had to be confined to a hospital. Unfortunately, my mother had just passed away and I had no place to live. Kentucky Manor provided me an opportunity to live independently. I love my patio and the security provided at the place. I hate to think what would of happened to my life had I not found this place. I love it here.

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Strengthening Families

Agency: NM Asian Family Center
Families

Program: Supporting Immigrant Asian

Client Story:

A year after in Albuquerque, a client lost her husband to cancer. Leaving her to take care of two elementary school children without a support network. Her lack of English proficiency left her unable to handle the paperwork related to the death of her husband. With UW Funds, in FY10 NMAFC was able to help this family through this difficult transition. With the support of NMAFC, her children were connected to a child grief & loss center and the client was able to set up homework assistant and individual counseling at her children's school. Case management was provided in her first language to include support in filing her taxes, opening a bank account and working with a lawyer to write her will. With this support she was able to apply and obtain social security benefits, New Mexikid insurance for her children and State Coverage for herself. In addition, she filed and received her husband's life insurance. NMAFC worked with her on expanding her social support network within the Asian community and she now feels supported by friends and community members. As of last FY, she had begun ESL classes. NMAFC has a number of these same cases where clients are unable to access mainstream services and many whose situations are only exasperated by domestic or sexual violence.

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Assisting People with Disabilities

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Agency: NM School for the Blind & Visually Impaired
Services to Children

Program: Community Outreach

Client Story:

(This is a testimonial)

For months now I have been thinking about how to thank you for all you have done for April. I have perused books with prophetic verses, lovely pictures, plants, flower, edible fruit and a variety of teacher supplies. Nothing seemed appropriate.

I am reminded of To Sir with Love. How do you thank someone for taking you from crayons to perfume? Although April is nowhere near ready to wear perfume, she has grown so much. It is not just the big things or the items on her IEP that contribute to her blossoming. The way each of you has treated her with love and caring. The way you took the time to gently push her to excel, or in some cases playfully encouraged her into staying on task.

One of the greatest gifts you have given us is that of comfort and well-being. You were always concerned with her overall interaction with the world. If she was overly tired, not eating well, if she had a fall or if she just seemed a bit off, you knew and acted upon this information. You passed the information on to us; we always knew what kind of day our cherished child had experienced. Our most heartfelt thanks,
Monique

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Supporting Education

Agency: Pathways Academy

Program: Pathways Academy

Client Story:

Lexi came to Pathways Academy shortly before the finalization of a state funded adoption after being in treatment foster care due to extreme abuse and neglect. She was 9. When she first joined us at Pathways Academy, her behavior was extreme. She was angry and hurt, which resulted in daily temper tantrums often requiring staff to hold her in an attempt to keep her from hurting herself or others. These tantrums often lasted for hours at a time and appeared to be the result of Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) and Reactive Attachment Disorder. The teachers at Pathways Academy worked tirelessly to support Lexi and her new family through this trying time. Gradually, Lexi grew to trust us and understand that she was safe and protected here. Due to the consistency of the program, a committed family and predictable consequences, the degree and frequency of her tantrums has diminished dramatically. Being a private school, we see parents daily and this frequent home/school communication is a key component to the consistency that Lexi relies on.

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Preventing Family Violence

Agency: PB&J Family Services
Children and Parents

Program: Therapeutic Preschool for

Client Story:

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Below is an excerpt from Aimee’s speech (PB&J mom) given at PB&J’s 2010 Therapeutic Preschool in the South Valley:

“Since my child was an infant I was unable to understand what my child was trying to tell me. With frustration mounting and tensions running high, [he] and especially I were at our wits end.... As a person with a socially avoidant personality issue, I know the challenges and troubles it has presented me with; and so I have not wanted the same for my child.... Growing up I’ve dealt with abuse, neglect and abandonment. I am a product of the environment of my experience... Having this knowledge at hand I decided I would not repeat the cycle. I wanted better for myself and my son. As I started my journey into parenthood I realized with my mistakes that I was repeating history...” Aimee stood with 50 graduating families who like her, broke the multigenerational cycle of family violence.

Strengthening Families

Agency: Pegasus Legal Services for Children

Program: Kinship Guardianship Program

Client Story:

Pegasus worked with MK to get Kinship Guardianship of her thirteen year old sister, CK. CK was diagnosed with Fetal Alcohol Syndrome at age four and has significant developmental delays. CK was shuttled from caregiver to caregiver throughout her life. MK was seventeen the first time she rescued two year old CK from their parents’ home. The home was covered in urine and feces, maggots fed upon unwashed dishes, and there were holes in the floor of the house: a dangerous place for any child. At that time, MK was too young to take responsibility for CK and CK was eventually returned to her parents. But years later, MK, now thirty, reunited with CK and came to Pegasus for help in obtaining legal guardianship of her sister. MK’s parents contested the guardianship proceedings, but Pegasus was able to get MK temporary guardianship of CK within a short period of time, and, after a year and a half of litigation, the court finalized MK’s appointment as guardian of her sister.

Assisting People with Disabilities

Agency: Presbyterian Ear Institute

Program: PEI Oral School

Client Story:

My husband and I have a three year old son, Adam, who was born profoundly deaf. Because neither of us are deaf nor have family members who are deaf, we were extremely concerned. After trying hearing aids with no success, we had Adam implanted with two electronic hearing devices called Cochlear Implants. We then discovered the Presbyterian Ear Institute (PEI) School here in Albuquerque. PEI maintains different types of subject matter experts to support children who are born deaf or are hard of hearing. These experts consists of individuals who know how to program, maintain, and trouble- shoot Adam’s hearing equipment and trained teachers who understand speech, language, and testing. There are also other families we can share similar experiences with. But the most important thing PEI represents to us is that it is our three year old son’s school. Every day we drop Adam off at PEI knowing he is in the best place he can be to learn how to succeed and excel in a world of sound.

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Eliminating Hunger

Agency: Presbyterian Medical Services

Program: Senior Services Torrance County

Client Story:

Ms HH has been a home bound client since 2006. Her ability to shop and prepare nutritionally balanced meals has been compromised by her health. At one time she was on soft foods only. Since having a balanced daily meal delivered to her home, she states that her health has improved. She relies on the home-delivered meal for daily nutrition and for food safety information. The milk she receives is a vital part of her meal plan.

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Assisting People with Disabilities

Agency: LifeROOTS, Inc, formerly known as RCI, Inc.

Program: Children's Therapies and Services

Client Story:

Two month old Will was referred to RCI for evaluation. At birth he was diagnosed with a heart defect requiring immediate surgery. Post-op he required a ventilator and NG-tube feeds. His strength and endurance decreased and he demonstrated motor skills at the 5th percentile for his age.

“One of the biggest things about RCI was they came to my home” says mom. “We were very afraid of the RSV virus those first two years. His first 4 months home after getting out of the hospital, we rarely took him anywhere. We were successful in that Will never got RSV. The Occupational Therapist was outstanding. She would tell me why she was doing the things with Will so I would understand what we were trying to accomplish at the different stages. I also liked the exercises she would give me to do in between our visits. Will is thriving. He is back on the weight chart at 3yr old, the first time since 6 months. He now asks for food and says he is hungry! When I take him to playgrounds he jumps in with the other kids and becomes the leader in play. He is now mastering a trike. Will knows all his numbers and letters and is now learning the sounds each letter makes. He loves to sing and dance and even yodels along to a Roy Rogers CD!”

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Building Independence

Agency: Reading Works, Inc.

Program: Adult Literacy Program

Client Story:

[This learner has participated in Reading Works' programming for 12 months. He asked that his name not be used.]

I am 47 years old and a native of N.M. I have always had low Self esteem . . . because of reading. In School my teacher's would send me to the library and let me play with art. They never tried to take time to work with me, but they always past me. I stayed in School till the 9th grade. I stopped going to classes

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because it was too embarrassing. I was afraid they would ask me to read. . . . One night I was watching TV and Saw an advertisement on TV on literacy. A lady talked to me . . . I cried a lot. . . . That was my first Step to reading. She Set me up with a real nice and patient tutor from Reading Works. . . . I think I started at the third grade level and now I think I am at the 5th or 6th grade level. . . . My goals are to read and Spell better and next year I want to buy a Computer and learn how to use it. Thank you all for giving me hope. I have to remember a person is never too old to learn.

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Building Independence

Agency: ReadWest, Inc.

Program: Adult Literacy Program

Client Story:

Leonard was a high school “jock,” playing varsity on all three sports teams; however, the popular big man on campus couldn’t read. Administrators addressed his reading problems by placement in special education classes, and yearly promotions, so he could continue to shine in sports. He graduated... with a diploma he couldn’t read. Leonard played the role of tough guy after school, as a nightclub bouncer or in other jobs that didn’t require literacy skills. When called for jury duty he had to admit that he couldn’t complete the forms. Leonard finally landed a job where his teamwork and ethic were recognized, but had to refuse a promotion that required computer input. Thankfully, his sympathetic boss called ReadWest where Leonard’s literacy tutor is showing him new ways of learning. “I feel confident now. I’m learning to read,” he said. “I used to think I couldn’t, but my tutor showed me I can.”

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Eliminating Hunger

Agency: Roadrunner Food Bank, Inc.

Program: Eliminating Childhood Hunger

Client Story:

This story comes from the principal at one of our Food for Kids Schools. She writes, "Nathan is a wonderful 5th grade boy who cares for his four younger siblings. Nathan is the only 'adult' in the household. A few weeks ago, we had a Friday holiday and Nathan came to me early in the week about 6:30 am in the parking lot with concern in his eyes. He wanted to know if we would pass out backpacks on Thursday instead of Friday that week. Nathan told me that if that wasn’t possible, he would have to find another way to feed his siblings that weekend. I assured him that he and his siblings would get their backpacks on Thursday of that week. Until now, I had no idea how valuable this program was to our students."

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Promoting Healthy Lives

Agency: Ronald McDonald House Charities of NM

Program: Lodging Program

Client Story:

Antonio is 17 and has muscular dystrophy. He and his parents, Martha and Richard, live in Las Cruces and have been coming to the Ronald McDonald House since he was diagnosed at age eight. Each trip to

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Albuquerque is filled with doctor visits at Carrie Tingley and UNM and the Muscular Dystrophy Association.

The whole family loves having the Ronald McDonald House available to them during their time in Albuquerque. Mom says that the House is warm and comfortable and has a loving feeling to it. Antonio is in a wheelchair and after a full day of appointments he loves to come home to the Ronald House. Until an elevator was installed during the recent expansion, he had never been on the second floor. Now he can take the elevator upstairs by himself and sit in the TV room. He watches motorcycle shows and some sports stations. Antonio also spends time in the computer room playing games and looking at YouTube. The House is easy for him to maneuver around and he loves the freedom.

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Promoting Healthy Lives

Agency: Samaritan Counseling Center
Children

Program: Coordinated Mental Health Care for

Client Story:

8 year-old Raul was referred by his school for counseling because his teacher was concerned about his disruptive behavior in the classroom. He cried in the morning after his mother dropped him off, and he refused to do work while in class. At recess he had gotten into trouble for hitting another student. His mother felt the changes were due to their recent move from another state. She was also worried about how her family would survive financially because her husband was recently laid off from his job. Besides Raul, she had two other children.

The therapist began by meeting with his mother to find out more about her concerns and worked with Raul using play therapy. This was a non-threatening way for Raul to express himself. The therapist also worked with Raul's parents to find out what things helped him in the home and identified ways to help him adjust to the move and his father's losing his job. The therapist met with Raul's teacher to determine ways to help Raul to focus at school.

After working with Raul and his family, his parents and teacher reported a change in his behavior. His grades had improved, and he no longer cried in the morning. His mother said that he was the "Raul she was used to."

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Strengthening Families

Agency: Saranam, LLC

Program: Self Sufficiency

Client Story:

This is the story of a family 2.5 years post exit responding to Saranam's annual follow-up letter. "Saranam was such an important part of our lives! Since we left Saranam, I married the father of my youngest child. We are in the process of buying our own house! Sadly, the father to three of my children was murdered in August 2009. And then the father of my oldest daughter was murdered in September 2009. My husband has amazingly stepped up and is planning to adopt them. The kids are all doing well in school, and even the two youngest are starting to read at 1 and 3 years. I have also been working as a certified nurse assistant (CNA). Because of the amazing, caring people involved with Saranam, I have been given a second chance at life. I love Saranam so much for that!"

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Serving Our Seniors

Agency: Senior Citizen's Law Office, Inc.
Seniors

Program: Free Civil Legal Services for

Client Story:

SCLO received a referral from the Long-Term Care Ombudsman regarding an older individual residing at a nursing home in Belen, who reported that he appeared to have been “dumped” at the nursing home and was verbalizing a strong desire to leave. It was discovered that he and his wife had issued a Power of Attorney to their grandson, who in turn executed a Transfer on Death Deed to benefit himself with ownership of the couple’s home on their death, and he also executed a Will, devising all remaining assets to himself. Within 24 hours of the referral, SCLO was able to assist the couple with executing Revocations of the Power of Attorney and arranged for client’s discharge from the nursing home. Although client is frail, he is mentally sharp, and still capable of his own toileting, eating, drinking, and dressing. He desires to spend the rest of his life at home, and certainly at this point, it appears that his being confined to a nursing home is more of a detriment than benefit to him. SCLO was also able to accomplish the quick Revocation of the Transfer on Death Deed, the return of an extensive list of personal property, and some \$26,500 in remaining personal funds.

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Building Independence

Agency: Sew Right, Inc.

Program: Sew Right 101 Skills

Client Story:

Olivia Selama seemed quite depressed when she first came to Sew Right. She was homesick for her county of Eritrea and was struggling with her ESL classes. Unemployed, sitting at home all day, fully dependant on her adult son, was not her dream of coming to the USA “where the government is good” and “People help each other”. Olivia’s son Betwel has many struggles of his own. He was inscripted into the army at 14. Olivia did not see him again for 6 years. He now holds down 2 full time jobs in hopes that his sweetheart may join him. Olivia thrived at Sew Right. Completing 101 with ease, student teaching, making new friends and earning her own money. Her English improved, allowing her to share her feelings- “sometimes I can’t think... I’m remembering the bad things that happened in the war”. “My son is picking better friends. I cook for them” “ I feel so happy, happy now”!

I like to think that her involvement with Sew Right has also helped her relationship with her son. He can breathe and hang out with his own friends knowing that his Mom is busy doing her own thing. Turns out Betwel wants to take our 101 class on his one day off! I see a family business in the making!

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Serving Our Seniors

Agency: Share Your Care, Inc.

Program: Alivio Caregiver Support Program

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Client Story:

I enrolled my mother to Share Your Care's day center at Barelas Senior Center in July 2010. Working full time, I found it rather challenging to provide total safety for my mother who has dementia in combination with gait and balance problems. Before I found Share Your Care, I did not realize that mom was very trusting of con artists and didn't have the capacity to question what was being told to her. If they told her she owed money and threatened her, she would give the required information that legally bound her to pay them. For this reason, it was legally impossible to undo their false claims for payment and much of her resources were depleted. Even worse, many of these people were operating out of the USA, thus able to avoid prosecution. Now that I have secured a safe daytime place for mom, she is no longer being taken advantage of. United Way funding has provided me with a way to ensure my mother is in good, safe hands allowing me to work at my job worry free.

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Building Independence

Agency: St. Martin's Hospitality Center

Program: Shelter to Self-Sufficiency

Client Story:

Samantha is a 29-year-old mother of three young sons. She initially came to SMHC because, "I needed help." Samantha used alcohol and cocaine excessively. She was caught by the police and had to go through drug court. As a result of her addiction, "I lost everything. I lost my family, my job, my home and myself." She was homeless for ten months before coming to SMHC in Sept. '08. After entering Phase II of the program, she soon moved herself and her sons into an apartment and was able to begin putting the pieces of her life back together.

Samantha got a job as a home health aide and restrained from using any drugs or alcohol; she has now been sober for almost three years. In addition to working, Samantha is currently attending school full-time at CNM and working towards a degree in Accounting. Through life skills training, Samantha has been able to repair important relationships. In Nov '09, Samantha and her family closed on a home in Westside Albuquerque where they are happily residing today. Her older sons are doing well in school and participate in many extracurricular activities. Samantha graduated from the program in April, 2010.

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Eliminating Hunger

Agency: Storehouse West
Sandoval County

Program: Food for Families in

Client Story:

Dorianna is a single mother with a 16 year-old son. One of our volunteers found her working at a low paying job. She was without a car and rode her bicycle five miles each way to and from work every day through rain, snow and wind. Her employer went out of business and she lost her job. A Storehouse West volunteer was able to help by providing her transportation to receive food. We also assisted her with utility bills. She tells us she is grateful to Storehouse West. She is excited that she is now attending school.

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Strengthening Families

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Agency: Susan's Legacy
Recovery Program

Program: From Surviving to Thriving-
Recovery Program

Client Story:

Tiffany came into the Susan's Legacy (SL) program in 2006, after her transition from prison into residential treatment. After struggling for 10 years with mental health issues and eventually becoming an addict, she had lost everything including her relationships with her 5 children. Her 2 youngest children developed behavioral problems that were affecting all aspects of their lives. During an 18 month process in the SL program Tiffany developed a strong support system in a 12-Step program and built a long term foundation of personal life skills and recovery. She has developed trusting relationships through a long process of healing and reintegration with 4 of her 5 children and their behavior problems have improved. She has entered college and is an Honor Society student. And most amazingly of all is that she discovered a positive way for her experiences to benefit others by coming full circle as the new Program Manager/Case Manager for the Susan's Legacy Recovery Program (SLRP).

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Assisting People with Disabilities

Agency: The Arc of New Mexico
Community Building Program

Program: Empowerment and

Client Story:

Tony Chavez' leadership has been invaluable in supporting the advocates in the metro area. As the Senior Advocate Trainer, Tony provides training and mentorship to other self advocate trainers as well as accompanying them to training classes, if needed. He is a member of several local and statewide task forces affecting public policy. His involvement in advocacy issues and training has truly improved the lives of many individuals with developmental disabilities. Through his own tireless efforts and the support he has received, Tony has been instrumental in changing the system from traditional supports to self directed supports, for himself and others.

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Eliminating Hunger

Agency: The Storehouse

Program: Food Rescue Network

Client Story:

Linda (all names changed at the client's request) is 40 years-old and is married to Sergio. Together, the couple has two elementary school-aged children: Graciela, age 8 and Stella, age 5. Linda lives in one of the zip codes from which The Storehouse receives one of the highest numbers of customers: 87121 This is her story: "My husband has been unemployed now for a few months. Before [he was unemployed] we didn't worry. Now we worry about money for food. The Storehouse has been very helpful with food and The Storehouse services help relieve some of our worry. If the Storehouse was not available it would greatly affect my family's ability to eat. We could not have made it through the month and I don't know what I would do without the help. Thanks to The Storehouse, we have hope."

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Assisting People with Disabilities

Agency: Transitional Living Services

Program: Congregate Living

Client Story:

M McD, dually diagnosed with Schizoaffective Disorder and Substance Dependence, was admitted to a TLS group home a couple of years ago. Upon arrival, he was severely psychotic and disorganized. He displayed poor social skills, was isolated in his room, and needed consistent reminders to complete basic activities of daily living.

With continued non-judgmental support and a stable living environment, M McD began to adjust to the daily routines of the group home and thrived. He began to spend less time in his room, began interacting with peers and staff and attended to activities of daily living such as cleaning, grocery shopping and even learned to cook.

Today, M McD is living independently in an apartment in the community. He lives with his girlfriend and is the father of a six-week-old son. M McD is maintaining a part-time job, is meeting the financial obligations of his family and is successfully addressing his mental health issues.

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Promoting Healthy Lives

Agency: University of New Mexico Foundation

Program: Comadre A Comadre

Client Story:

We received a referral of a young 31 year old breast cancer diagnosed Spanish-speaking woman in June 2010. She was emotionally distraught and still in shock of her diagnosis at such an early age. She had also been informed that she also tested positive for the breast cancer gene. Upon an intake assessment, the Community Resource Navigator, Michaela Granados submitted the appropriate financial applications for an emergency fund, and was able to obtain funds for a new place along with bedding and to cover her household expenses. In addition, she was assigned a Peer Patient Navigator, Priscilla Cabrera, who met her at her first medical and treatment appointments and provided emotional support until the present. This client now has almost completed her treatment and is doing quite well. She now wants to help our program with fundraising and in the future says that when she opens her business, she will donate a portion to our Program.

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Building Independence

Agency: Valencia County Literacy Council

Program: Valencia Literacy Program

Client Story:

Leonila began classes in 2008 in El Cerro Mission because of the preschool available for her son, Teo. She had no confidence in her ability to speak English then, and she was afraid to talk to people in English. Now, she has raised five levels in English. In addition, having completed only the 9th grade, Leonila has now received her GED. Her teachers say that she is pleasant and helpful to other students, quickly internalizes new information, and tells stories in English with more and more sophistication. Leonila also participates actively in the Parent Teacher Council (PTC), especially by bringing professionally made cakes for raffles, birthdays, and potlucks. She reports that she is more involved in Teo's education, reads to Teo more, and visits the library more. Teo, who also attends Headstart, is a

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bright and verbal 5 year old with a large vocabulary. He is independent, sociable, and full of suggestions. This last May, Leonila was ESL Student of the Year at UNM-Valencia.

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Strengthening Families

Agency: Wings Ministry

Program: Wings for L.I.F.E.

Client Story:

Jane, a single parent, is a Native American mother of 7 children ages 6 months to 18. Her husband has been in and out of prison. She came to WFL because she needed support, help parenting the children, and she was worried about the children. Jane has attended WFL for several years because her family needed support and she said, "The kids were closed up and not able to express themselves. WFL has taught them to be more open and to speak in public. From listening to the speakers, they don't want to give up. They have learned a lot and use it in their everyday lives. We're thankful for having Wings to help guide us this far. We communicate better as a family and use the placemats at our dinner table. Now we eat together and communicate together. They look forward to going every week." Her children have listened to the stories of the speakers, people returning from prison, and she feels they are making more positive decisions in their lives. WFL has been a life-changing program for the whole family.

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Sheltering Neighbors

Agency: Youth Development, Inc.
Shelter

Program: Amistad Youth Crisis

Client Story:

LY is a 17 year old female who will turn 18 in May. She left her family home in March, 2010 after conflicts with her parents. She is of Korean nationality and her parents are very strict. She initially stayed with friends then on the streets for a couple of nights before a teacher told her boyfriend about Amistad and made a referral on her behalf. She had been homeless for 6 months. LY is pregnant. Staff at the shelter helped her to inform her parents of her pregnancy and she is "rebuilding a relationship with my parents again." She has had 2 overnight home visits. She is re-enrolled in school, staying away from "negative influences" and focusing on making the best decisions for her and her baby. Amistad provided a safe, structured place for LY to get off the streets, reconnect with her parents, pursue her education and plan for a constructive future given the challenge of becoming a teen mother. She is awaiting placement at a group home for pregnant teens.

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Promoting Healthy Lives

Agency: YWCA Middle Rio Grande

Program: Women's Health Equity

Client Story:

We received a call from a woman whose doctor had recommended a mammogram. She formerly worked as an attorney, but after experiencing psychological difficulties was unable to continue her practice and now works simple part-time jobs. Her screening mammogram would have cost \$276, which she could not afford with an income of \$13,000. She found out through her clinic that YWCA could help. Her results

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were abnormal, and she needed a diagnostic mammogram and ultrasound – an additional \$403. The YWCA also paid for the tests, which came back suspicious, and she needed a biopsy. At this point the YWCA, together with NMDOH, signed her up for the BCC program. She did have breast cancer, but because she had been navigated through the proper channels, was able to enroll in BCC Medicaid for treatment. She was so grateful for the financial assistance, advice, and support. She was overwhelmed, frightened, and unable to connect the dots on her own. She said that without our program, she would never have had the tests. After her diagnosis, we contacted her to check in and provide her with resources, such as support group information. She lives alone, and was grateful to know she could call us anytime.

