



NEW MEXICO FIRST

People. Ideas. Progress.

New Mexico First and Project SHARE NM Newsletter
Stay Informed and Engaged
November 9, 2020



November is Native American Heritage Month. Native Americans have inhabited the region now known as New Mexico for thousands of years, and their presence is felt throughout the state. We pay tribute to the ancestry and traditions of Native Americans. The month is a time to celebrate rich and diverse cultures, traditions, and histories and to acknowledge the important contributions of Native people.

Durango Films and Durango Farmers Market are inviting you to a FREE virtual screening of **Gather** in celebration of Native American Heritage Month, November 1 – 15, 2020. This film outlines the revitalization and re-creation of Indigenous food systems in America. **Gather** takes viewers to tribal communities where members are actively working on Native food sovereignty issues. Here is your [FREE link](#) and password (Gather2020) to watch **Gather**, November 1 – 15.



A Robust & Responsive Continuum of Care for New Mexico

New Mexico First's 2020 Town Hall on Health: Mind, Body, Spirit, brought over 200 New Mexicans from across the state together to identify the challenges and the resources to build healthy, resilient communities. One challenge recognizes the need to rebuild our health system to provide a continuum of care. From health promotion and prevention to treatment, rehabilitation, and palliative care, the health of New Mexicans is improved when all residents in our communities have access to high quality and appropriate levels of support to achieve good physical, mental, and behavioral health outcomes across the age span.

In the final town hall session, participants identified recommendations and related strategies that achieved consensus among at least 85% of participants.

Addressing a continuum of care, the following recommendations were forwarded for further action:

- Use health care services and outcomes data to deploy resources where there is the greatest need. Put families in the center of a payment system redesign rather than the institution.
- Build a more just and inclusive continuum of care that includes coordinated and comprehensive health promotion, illness and injury prevention, and early intervention in ways that systematically address health inequities and disparities.
- Increase capacity of community health councils to engage their community to promote health and prevent illness and injury.
- Reduce discrimination and stigma and de-criminalize behavioral and mental health needs, including substance use issues.
- Involve those who are most affected on every level, and make sure that public health and healthcare organizations use anti-racist and other intersecting oppressions and health literacy principles to improve all services. Using their language in all communications so we can meet people where they are.

Action teams have been formed to move these recommendations into policies and programs. Other action teams address building NM's healthcare workforce; addressing trauma and promoting resilience; and increasing food security and reducing hunger in NM. The [Final Town Hall Report](#) is available on the NM First website. To sign on to an action team, email info@nmfirst.org.



Mutual Aid

This has been a year of challenges for families and communities around the world, and New Mexico has not been exempted. Yet we have also seen examples of communities rising to meet the challenge, working together to offer mutual aid and care for each other, especially the most vulnerable.

While many organizations are responding individually to the needs of those they serve, some New Mexico communities are forming community-wide coalitions to provide up-to-date, accurate, trusted information, to identify and match community members who need help with community members who volunteer to provide it, and in the process to strengthen our sense of community, that we are, indeed, all in this together.

Across New Mexico, we can share lessons and learn from the various ways our communities are providing mutual aid. We encourage you to learn more about these community efforts and to let us know how your community is coming together to address these challenging times. Contact wendy@nmfirst.org.

[#Alltogether Santa Fe](#) is mobilizing a team across city and county agencies to answer your questions about impacts, resources, programs, ways to cope and connect, and ways to help others who are impacted by health risks and economic disruption due to COVID-19. "Working together, we can help each other minimize negative impacts and optimize the timeline to a full recovery."

[Cruces Contigo](#) is a way for Las Crucens to help each other combat isolation and loneliness during this time of physical distancing, due to COVID-19. Each resident is paired with another participant who check in on each other a few times per week. Visit the [website](#) and follow on [Facebook](#).

In Santa Fe, [Earth Care](#) is coordinating a [mutual aid network](#) in partnership with community members Red Nation, DSA-Santa Fe, and Fathers New Mexico. “We recognize that we have the opportunity and responsibility to create a grassroots response that strengthens our community's connection, social capital, and resilience - while centering the needs of our most vulnerable and building power to address structural inequalities.” Forms in [Spanish](#) and [English](#) are available online to request or offer support. Online [donations](#) are welcome.

[Enchanted Circle COAD](#) has adopted a national model drawing on the years of experience in Community Organizations Active in Disasters. The EC COAD is made up of various private sector and non-governmental agencies, businesses, nonprofits, faith-based groups and community leaders to foster effective preparedness, response and recovery for the people of the Enchanted Circle as needed. In addition, [Taos Connects](#) provides a list of community projects that volunteers can sign on to.

[Fight for Our Lives](#), a youth-led organization in Albuquerque, is leading a community coalition that is looking out for neighbors by delivering care packages to those in need. Go to their [Mutual Aid Page](#), to request assistance or to volunteer to help.

[Grant County Coronavirus Update Website](#) is a community-wide effort involving public, private and nonprofit partners to provide the latest information and resources to Grant County residents. In addition to the website, the Gila Mimbres Community Radio (KURU / 89.1FM), provides a ½-hour [weekly broadcast/podcast](#) with updates.

[McKinley Mutual Aid](#) delivers food boxes, water, cleaning supplies, and personal hygiene products to many communities of McKinley County including the Sovereign Indigenous Nations of the Navajo (Diné) & Zuni (Ashiwi) peoples, as well as those neighboring communities on the borders that share resources, relatives and lived communal experiences. To track their current efforts, follow their [Facebook Page](#).

Resources

MFA's COVID-19 Housing Cost Assistance Program helps pay the housing costs of income-eligible households and residents of tribal lands who are experiencing financial hardship due to the COVID-19 health crisis. Recipients will receive as much as \$1,500 per month for up to three months to pay back rent or mortgage payments. Payments on real estate contracts, mobile or manufactured home liens, land or lots may also be covered. Payments will be made directly to the landlord, servicer, escrow company or other housing provider. The assistance does not have to be repaid.

MFA has had a large number requests from applicants to have a paper application mailed to them. If you could help us distribute those applications to your contacts, it will free up MFA staff to process applications and assist callers. Links to English and Spanish versions of the paper application are here: [English](#) and [Spanish](#).

Please note that the most efficient way for people to apply for housing cost assistance is through the electronic application portal on the MFA website housingnm.org. Paper applications should be submitted **only** if there is no other option.

As a reminder, the application window will close at 5 p.m. next Friday, November 13. Applications received after 5 p.m. will not be reviewed.

USDA Farm to School Grant Program Request for Applications (RFA) for fiscal year 2021 is now available. The solicitation will remain open until 11:59 pm ET on January 8th, 2021. Eligible schools, state and local agencies, Indian tribal organizations, small- to medium-sized agricultural producers or groups of small- to medium-sized agricultural producers, and non-profit organizations are eligible to apply. Visit the [Grant Applicant Resources Page](#) to access helpful resources, including links to webinars that provide specific assistance on applying for a Farm to School Grant.

VISIT SHARE New Mexico's [COVID-19 Page](#) for additional resources.

Tip for Civic Engagement

In communities across the state, people are coming together (virtually these days) to strengthen health. Community Health Councils, school-based health clinics, collaborations with local Department of Health promotion teams, boards for Federally Qualified Health Clinics, boards for major health systems, the Primary Health Association and many others are working on efforts within and across systems to improve the health of New Mexicans. In addition, there are many multi-issue organizations that are working to address some of the root causes of illness and injury from physical health to behavioral and mental health. Active engagement in local and statewide efforts allows people to innovate, collaborate, and advance systems change more effectively. Community voice and engagement in core to understanding and addressing issues. To find opportunities for engagement and match your great passion to our communities' great needs, visit <https://sharenm.org/nm-resources> to find local organizations working on health issues you care about and learn how to get involved.

This section is authored by Lilly Irvin-Vitela, President and Executive Director of New Mexico First. She invites you to connect! Email her at lilly@nmfirst.org.

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Our Mission. Our Values.

Our Mission

To be a catalyst for positive change by engaging citizens in policy and enabling action.

Our Core Values

Meaningfully engaging New Mexicans in public policy; Striving for and respecting consensus; Pursuing and respecting diverse points of views; Ensuring inclusion and transparency; Rising above partisan politics; Changing policy to improve people's lives; Creating an informed citizenry that is powerfully motivated; Reaching out statewide including rural and tribal communities; Partnering with others; Promoting civility and Democracy at its best!

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