

Our Communities Know the Way Home

Promising Practices for Innovative, Culturally Grounded, and Community-Driven Approaches to Homelessness Across New Mexico

PREPARED FOR

Sarita Nair

Cabinet Secretary
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Acknowledgements

To the organizations whose commitment, love, and care are reflected in every aspect of this work.

Your work reflects a calling to walk alongside others, bridge gaps, share knowledge, and create pathways to resources and opportunity. These practices demonstrate what is possible when communities respond to homelessness with compassion, cultural understanding, and a deep responsibility to those most vulnerable.

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Executive Summary

New Mexico holds a rich and enduring history of community-centered approaches to human wellbeing, rooted in the knowledge systems of its Indigenous, Chicano, and Mestizo peoples. The Indigenous Pueblo nations, Navajo and Apache communities, and Chicano and Mestizo populations of this state carry knowledge systems built on a fundamental principle: the wellbeing of a person cannot be separated from the wellbeing of the community around them.

This principle is not abstract; it is reflected in lived practice. At Acoma Pueblo, one of the oldest continuously inhabited villages in the United States, community members describe knowledge as something held collectively, valued for its practical usefulness in supporting the life of the whole community (Reano & Hasara, 2023). Blackfoot teachings document a parallel understanding, that human dignity is innate rather than earned, and that ensuring all members of a community are cared for is a shared obligation, not an individual one (Ravilochan, 2021). In many of these traditions, community is understood as essential to wellbeing and survival.

This same ethic shaped the Chicano organizing tradition that runs through New Mexico and the broader Southwest. Dolores Huerta built transformative change not through policy alone but through personal relationships, familial networks, and "community-centered consciousness and non-hierarchical leadership" (Ortega, 2024). Her model reflected what Indigenous scholars have long affirmed, meaningful change requires centering local knowledge, honoring lived experience, and treating community members as full collaborators rather than recipients (Caxaj, 2015).

The Promising Practices Evaluation was built on this foundation. Commissioned by the Office of Housing in collaboration with the Center for Excellence in Social Work and SBS Evaluation and Program Development Specialists, this evaluation was designed to identify and document service delivery innovations that reflect the strengths, values, and ingenuity of the communities they serve. Rather than imposing external standards of effectiveness, it sought out practices that emerged organically from community need, cultural knowledge, and lived experience. Its purpose is to generate actionable insights and strategic recommendations to guide future investments, policy decisions and program development aimed at reducing homelessness and improving housing stability throughout New Mexico.

Design and Purpose

The Promising Practices Evaluation is organized around five regions consistent with the Department of Health regional map and division, ensuring alignment with ongoing statewide initiatives. Service providers were drawn from the statewide initiative candidate pool and grouped by service category, including Emergency Shelters, Transitional Living Facilities, Warming Centers, Street Outreach, Housing Navigation, Mobile and Integrative Care, Youth Pathways, and Other Supportive Services.

The evaluation employs a mixed-methods approach integrating document review, structured interviews, regional group discussions, frontline staff surveys, administrative data review where available, and site visits. This structure was selected to accommodate the varied data maturity and organizational capacity of participating providers while maintaining methodological rigor and comparability across regions.

Regional findings and statewide recommendations will inform future programming decisions, technical assistance priorities, and funding strategies for the Office of Housing.

Definition of a "Promising Practice"

New Mexico's communities have long understood that effective solutions emerge from within, shaped by cultural knowledge, lived experience, and a collective commitment to care. It is within this context that the Promising Practices Evaluation defines its central concept. For the purposes of this evaluation, a Promising Practice is an innovative, tested strategy or program that has demonstrated positive outcomes through preliminary data and field experience in addressing the needs of individuals experiencing homelessness. A practice is considered "promising" when it shows evidence of effectiveness sufficient to warrant further evaluation, documentation, and potential replication, even if it has not yet met the evidentiary threshold of a formally established best practice.

Promising practices reviewed in this evaluation were developed in response to one or more of the following drivers:

Driver for Practice Development	New Mexico Community Wisdom
Expanded need for service	Sustainable systems change requires more than technical solutions. Effective transformation occurs when structural improvements are paired with relational, cultural, and community-centered approaches that recognize the dignity, wisdom, and strengths of the people most directly affected by housing instability, behavioral health challenges, and systemic inequities.
Cultural or linguistic needs of the populations served	Individuals who serve our communities must create psychological safety, facilitate belonging, support wellbeing, and cultivate environments where people feel valued and respected.
Community-based innovation	Solutions are developed collaboratively, blending contemporary strategies with insights drawn from decades of local practice, ensuring practices are culturally grounded, adaptable, and enduring.
Lived experience feedback and guidance	Staff and community histories, local knowledge, and personal experience are treated as essential guides for decision-making, recognition, and culture-building.
Changes to funding requirements or other unexpected developments or cuts	As nonprofit leaders and frontline workers, we support one another in solidarity through a shared understanding of lived experience.
Adaptations made when evidence-based practices do not exist or are not applicable to the population served	Commitment to relational innovation and to one another as community members drives and creates the foundation for adaptation. The desire to serve supports the "I have your back" mentality.
Integration of cultural practice and evidence-based practice through a trauma-informed lens	The spaces in which we serve are more than settings for service delivery. They are environments that can foster healing, dignity, and trust. Honoring those we serve means creating spaces that support connection and strengthen a sense of belonging.
Multidisciplinary models of service provision	Rather than viewing success as an individual accomplishment, success is defined as dependent upon the strength of relationships and the willingness of people to work together toward common goals.

To be classified as a promising practice, each selected provider's approach was required to meet a consistent documentation standard. Providers documented the problem statement or service gap their practice addressed, the practice components and implementation approach, the target population and access pathway, and the workforce

model and required competencies. They further documented partnerships and multidisciplinary elements, any adaptations made and the rationale behind them, and considerations related to implementation timeline, maturity, and sustainability.

Outcomes

Process and Identification

The identification of promising practices followed a structured, multi-stage process designed to ensure transparency, equitable opportunity, and methodological defensibility.

Stage	Description
Stage 1 **Request for Participation**	The SBS evaluation team issued a Request for Participation to all potential partner organizations in the candidate pool. The request described the purpose and scope of the review, defined selection criteria and participation expectations, specified reporting and documentation requirements, provided estimated time commitments, and included confidentiality and data use considerations. Organizations were invited to complete an interest form by a specified deadline.
Stage 2 **Interest and Feasibility Screening**	For organizations expressing interest, the SBS evaluation team conducted a feasibility screening to assess eligibility against minimum criteria, the availability of data to support impact metrics, organizational capacity to participate, alignment between provider activities and the promising practice definition, and willingness to support site visits or virtual observations where applicable.
Stage 3 **Application Review and Scoring**	Each application was scored by five members of the Office of Housing with extensive professional experience in housing and homelessness services. Scores were applied using the standardized Promising Practices Scoring Rubric described below. All scoring was vetted and reviewed by Sindy Bolaños Sacoman, the project evaluation director, who brings extensive expertise in program evaluation and health and behavioral health care systems.
Stage 4 **Final Candidate Selection**	From the pool of screened and scored applicants, the evaluation team selected the most viable candidates for review. Selection decisions were documented with a brief rationale addressing criteria alignment, innovation relevance, data feasibility, and regional representation. The final sample was designed to achieve reasonable coverage across regions and service categories while reflecting practical participation constraints.

Scoring Rubric

Applications were evaluated using a standardized rubric organized into three domains and nine scored questions. Each question was scored on a scale of 0 to 3, for a maximum possible score of 27 points.

Scoring Scale

Score	Rating	Description
3	Clear, detailed evidence; high alignment; high capacity.	Comprehensive description based on observations and data, with demonstrated outcomes. Practice shows measurable change in the lives of people experiencing homelessness. The organization is willing to share data, has multiple staff and sufficient time to commit to the process, and is open to site visits.

Score	Rating	Description
2	Sufficient detail; shows potential; moderate capacity.	Standard description based on anecdotal evidence or general observation. Organization tracks outputs and demonstrates change but cannot yet link it directly to the program. Willing to share data, though with some concerns. Has minimal staff and time to commit; allows site visits with restrictions.
1	Vague or incomplete; minimal evidence; low capacity.	Minimal description with no clear evidence. Little or no data collected. Limited documented impact. Hesitant to provide data; staff are overextended and participation in the review process would likely be inconsistent. Unwilling or unable to host site visits.
0	Information missing or organization is unwilling to participate.	Response does not provide sufficient information to assess the practice, or the organization has indicated it is unwilling or unable to participate in the review process.

Score Interpretation

Score Range	Classification	Interpretation
21–27 points	High Potential	Strong candidate for a Promising Practice review.
14–20 points	Moderate Potential	Practice shows potential but may benefit from technical assistance prior to or during the review.
Below 14 points	Low Potential	Not currently ready for a Promising Practice review due to insufficient evidence of impact or insufficient organizational readiness for an evaluation.

Scoring Domains and Questions

The rubric was structured across three domains as follows:

Domain	Scoring Questions
Domain 1: Programmatic Design & Alignment	**Q1 — Component Description:** Application includes a list of activities with a clear connection between services and the needs of the unsheltered population. **Q2 — Promising Program:** Description clearly articulates why the approach is unique, promising, or effective for this specific demographic, with benefits that are clear and evident.
Domain 2: Evidence & Outcomes	**Q3 — Basis for Effectiveness:** Logic is rooted in observed success, participant feedback, or preliminary internal reviews. **Q4 — Data Availability:** Organization tracks specific outcome metrics. **Q5 — Impact on Individuals:** Demonstrable positive change in the lives of people experiencing homelessness.
Domain 3: Evaluation Feasibility & Readiness	**Q6 — Data Sharing Willingness:** Agency is willing to share data and understands the value of external evaluation. **Q7 — Staff Capacity:** Agency has multiple staff available for interviews and data preparation. **Q8 — Time Capacity:** Agency has five or more hours available for interviews and data preparation.

Domain	Scoring Questions
	Q9 — Site Visit Access: Agency is open to site visits and views this as an opportunity for transparency.

Reviewer comments were optional and were used to document special considerations, recommendations for revisions, or contextual information relevant to the scoring. All scores were reviewed and vetted by the project evaluation director, Sindy Bolaños Sacoman, to ensure consistency and methodological integrity across reviewers.

Promising Practices

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Brotherhood Love Out Loud

MEN'S FELLOWSHIP AND MENTORSHIP PROGRAM

EVALUATOR NOTE

Brotherhood LOL is an early-stage grassroots program that is distinct in character from other programs in this promising practices portfolio. It is not a direct homelessness services provider in the traditional sense; rather, it operates as a prevention and wellness-oriented model targeting the upstream social determinants such as isolation, lack of male community, and absence of peer support. These determinants often contribute to housing instability, substance use, and mental health crises among men. The program acknowledged at application that it has no formal outcome data at this time. This table is prepared to fairly represent the program's current state, its genuine promise as a prevention model, and the substantial development work needed before it could be characterized as an evidence-based practice.

Program Overview

Program Snapshot

Program Name	Brotherhood Love Out Loud
Location	Albuquerque, New Mexico
Fiscal Sponsor	Albuquerque Community Foundation, 624 Tijeras Ave NW, Albuquerque, NM 87102
Contact	Michael Silva, Founder | mike@rudeboycookies.com | 505-573-3361

Staffing

Brotherhood LOL is a volunteer-led grassroots organization. Michael Silva serves as Founder and primary program lead. The organization does not currently have paid staff.

Operations are supported by volunteer committee members who participate in monthly meetings and quarterly community service gatherings. The Albuquerque Community Foundation serves as fiscal sponsor, providing administrative infrastructure including financial management.

Unity Design provides social media management, website development, and press releases at no cost to Brotherhood (in-kind donation valued at approximately $1,500/month).

Program Design and Operations

Intended Outcomes

Brotherhood LOL operates on a prevention and upstream intervention model. Rather than providing direct services to individuals who are currently homeless, the program seeks to address the social conditions such as chronic isolation, absence of male peer community, suppressed emotional processing, and lack of positive accountability. These risk factors often contribute to the trajectory toward housing instability, substance use, and mental health crises in men.

Intended outcomes of the program are focused on reducing social isolation among men, improving emotional well-being, peer accountability, and mental health, strengthening family and community relationships, creating a pipeline of engaged male mentors investing in the next generation of Black and Brown boys in Albuquerque.

Populations Served

Brotherhood LOL serves men of all backgrounds in Albuquerque, New Mexico, with particular focus on:

- Men experiencing or at risk of social isolation, disconnection, and mental health challenges.
- Men who have traditionally navigated life alone and have not had access to structured peer support or community
- Black and Brown youth ages 11 to 19, served through the Lifeing 101 partnership and mentorship programs
- Professional and executive-level men (served through the Leaders of Leaders Circle), who may carry significant community influence and have the capacity to become mentors and supporters of Brotherhood's broader mission

The program's connection to homelessness response is primarily preventive and upstream. This program believes that by building stronger men with deeper community ties, peer accountability, and improved mental health, they can positively impact the conditions that lead to housing instability. The program also notes an intention to more directly serve individuals experiencing homelessness through its mentorship and fellowship activities as the program matures.

Albuquerque's unhoused population includes a significant proportion of men whose homelessness is compounded by untreated mental health conditions, substance use, and profound social isolation. Brotherhood's focus on building male community, emotional openness, and peer accountability addresses these root causes directly.

Evidence and Data

Quantitative Indicators

Event Attendance, Annual Brotherhood Social

Year	Venue	Tickets Sold	Page Views
2023	CNM Smith Brasher Hall	68	1,219
2024	Bosque School	54	762
2025	African American Performing Arts Center, Expo New Mexico	42	726

Note: 2024 and 2025 events were held on the same day as home UNM Lobo football games, which the organization believes significantly impacted attendance figures. The annual Summer Cookout, a separate free event, drew approximately 100 attendees in 2025.

Digital Reach

Channel	Reach	Engagements
Website (since 2023)	3,045 sessions	n/a
Facebook (since 2024)	13,662 page views	1,119
Instagram (since 2025)	12,257 page views	620

Mentorship Activity

- One active one-on-one mentoring relationship at John Adams Middle School, which began in January 2026
- Co-facilitation of a Lifeing 101 event in February 2026, a youth conference for Black and Brown boys ages 11 to 19
- Active partnership development with UNM Hospital and Boys & Girls Clubs of New Mexico

Pre/Post Survey Status

No pre/post participant surveys have been conducted to date. The organization has indicated intent to implement surveys beginning with the 4th Annual Brotherhood Social.

Impact and Data Maturity

Brotherhood LOL is in the earliest stage of data maturity among the programs in this promising practices portfolio. The organization acknowledged at application that it has 'no data at this time' for formal outcome measurement. Available data consists of event attendance figures, ticket sales, digital engagement metrics, and qualitative narrative.

This is not unusual for a volunteer-led grassroots organization in its third year of operation. The program's honest acknowledgment of this gap, combined with its stated intent to begin structured data collection with the 4th Annual Brotherhood Social, reflects appropriate self-awareness and readiness for growth.

- **Digital reach is growing:** The program's combined Facebook and Instagram reach (detailed under Quantitative Indicators) demonstrates meaningful and growing community awareness. For a volunteer-led program with no paid marketing budget, this reach reflects genuine community interest.
- **Mentorship activity is expanding:** The January 2026 launch of weekly one-on-one mentoring at John Adams Middle School and co-facilitation of Lifeing 101 represent a meaningful expansion from event-based programming toward sustained relationship-based intervention which is the model with the strongest evidence base for youth outcomes.

The program's impact narrative describes consistent participant feedback reflecting reduced isolation, improved emotional well-being, and a sense of belonging and purpose. Men who have traditionally navigated life alone report learning to rely on peer community and embrace vulnerability. These are qualitatively significant outcomes that align with research on social connectedness as a protective factor against homelessness, substance use, and mental health crises. Formalizing collection of this qualitative evidence through structured surveys and testimonials is a priority development need.

Internal Tracking

Brotherhood LOL demonstrates partial internal tracking of data for its program. They have been able to track the following data:

- **Event attendance:** ticket sales and page views tracked for the annual Brotherhood Social; approximate headcount for the Summer Cookout
- **Digital analytics:** Facebook and Instagram page view and engagement data tracked since program launch
- **Website analytics:** session counts tracked since inception (2023)
- **Mentorship activity:** informal tracking of active mentoring relationships and partnership development milestones

The program does not currently have:

- Participant intake forms or demographic data collection

- Pre/post surveys measuring changes in isolation, well-being, or life circumstances
- Longitudinal tracking of participant outcomes over time
- Formalized attendance records for monthly Men's Breakfast Club or quarterly community service gatherings

The upcoming 4th Annual Brotherhood Social has been identified as the planned launch point for pre/post survey implementation. Development of a simple, consistent attendance and participant tracking system for all program activities is the most immediate data infrastructure need.

Local Successes

Given the program's early-stage data maturity, positive trends are best documented through a combination of organizational growth indicators, qualitative community evidence, and partnership development milestones:

Organizational growth and sustainability: Now entering its fourth year of programming, Brotherhood LOL has grown from a single annual event to a multi-component organization with monthly programming (Men's Breakfast Club), an executive cohort (Leaders of Leaders Circle), an expanding mentorship portfolio, and developing chapters in other New Mexico communities (initial conversations in Taos). This organizational trajectory reflects genuine community demand and leadership commitment.

Growing mentorship ecosystem: The transition from event-only programming to active one-on-one mentoring, youth conference co-facilitation, and institutional partnership development with UNM Hospital and Boys & Girls Clubs represents a significant programmatic evolution in a short period. Mentorship is the program component with the strongest connection to homelessness prevention outcomes.

Community engagement as evidence: The Summer Cookout's near-100 attendees and consistent Brotherhood Social ticket sales (despite the Lobo football scheduling conflict) reflect sustained community investment in what Brotherhood offers. In Albuquerque's competitive event landscape, maintaining this level of engagement on a volunteer-run budget is itself a positive indicator.

Qualitative success narratives: Participants have described Brotherhood LOL as a trusted space for authentic male connection that has improved their emotional well-being, strengthened their family relationships, and inspired them to give back through mentorship. While these outcomes are not yet formally measured, they are consistent, unprompted, and reflect the program's theory of change.

Media and social recognition: Positive digital engagement and the program's growing reputation in Albuquerque reflect community recognition of a genuine gap being filled. Men's mental health and peer support infrastructure is a widely identified gap in homelessness prevention particularly for men of color and Brotherhood is one of very few organizations in New Mexico intentionally addressing it.

Scalability and Sustainability

Replicability

Brotherhood LOL's model is conceptually among the most replicable in this portfolio as it requires minimal financial resources, no specialized infrastructure, and is anchored in universal human needs for connection, belonging, and purpose. Its replicability, however, is highly dependent on finding the right local leadership:

Low-cost, high-leverage model: At roughly $3,868 in direct annual costs (see Total Program Cost), Brotherhood LOL demonstrates that meaningful community intervention can be achieved at very low cost when anchored by strong volunteer leadership and in-kind support relationships.

Chapter model potential: Initial conversations with a Taos resident about launching a Brotherhood chapter indicate organic replication interest. The program's brand identity, programming framework, and digital infrastructure (provided by Unity Design) could be extended to support chapter development in other New Mexico communities. Special consideration should be given to communities with significant populations of isolated men and limited peer support infrastructure.

Adaptability across community contexts: The core model, intentional spaces for male fellowship, community service, and mentorship, is adaptable to different cultural, geographic, and demographic contexts across New Mexico. Communities including Gallup, Farmington, Las Vegas, Espanola, and rural communities in the Rio Grande corridor could benefit from similar models tailored to their specific populations.

Fiscal sponsorship model: The Albuquerque Community Foundation fiscal sponsorship arrangement provides a replication pathway for community leaders in other cities who want to launch similar programs without the administrative burden of establishing a standalone nonprofit.

Replication constraint: The program's success is substantially dependent on the founder's personal relationships, credibility, and vision. A replication toolkit that includes programming guides, event planning templates, partnership development resources, and data collection tools, would be necessary to support chapter launches that do not rely solely on individual founder relationships.

Resources and Constraints

In-Kind Contributions

- **Unity Design:** social media management, website development, and press releases, estimated value $1,500/month ($18,000/year), currently donated at no cost
- **Volunteer labor:** all program operations, event staffing, and mentorship activities are performed by unpaid volunteers
- **Pepsi and Shamrock Foods:** food and beverage donations for Summer Cookout
- **Albuquerque Community Foundation:** fiscal sponsorship and administrative infrastructure

The program's total resource investment, including in-kind investments, is estimated at over $20,000 annually, with direct cash costs of under $4,000. This cost structure is both a strength and a vulnerability. Although there is a low barrier for replication, the heavy reliance on in-kind donations could be a barrier in rural communities.

Constraints

- Volunteer-only staffing creates capacity limits and sustainability risk; thus, the program cannot scale significantly without some paid staff support
- **In-kind dependency:** the program's communications capacity and digital presence rest on donated services that are not contractually guaranteed
- **No dedicated funding stream:** the program currently operates without grants or government contracts, limiting its ability to invest in data infrastructure, paid mentorship coordination, or chapter development

Scalability

Brotherhood LOL is at an inflection point where its demonstrated community value and growing program portfolio create a foundation for scaling, but significant organizational development is needed before scaling can be responsibly pursued:

- **Mentorship as the highest-leverage scaling opportunity:** Of all Brotherhood's program components, the mentorship portfolio that includes one-on-one weekly mentoring, Lifeing 101 partnership, UNM Hospital collaboration, and Boys & Girls Clubs partnership development, has the clearest connection to

homelessness prevention outcomes and the most direct path to scaling impact. Formalizing and growing the mentorship program, with trained and supported mentors, should be the primary scaling priority.

- **Chapter model:** The Taos chapter conversation and the program's general model adaptability suggest a chapter replication strategy could extend Brotherhood's reach across New Mexico communities. This would require development of a replication toolkit, training for chapter founders, and a support infrastructure.
- **Programming expansion:** Addition of regular programming components beyond monthly Men's Breakfast Club and quarterly gatherings would deepen the program's impact with existing participants. Implementing structured support groups, peer counseling trainings, or collaborating with community organizations during events that serve individuals experiencing homelessness could increase impact.
- **Scaling constraints include:** volunteer-only staffing model, absence of formal data infrastructure to demonstrate impact to funders, and the challenge of maintaining program quality and culture through growth.

Sustainability

Brotherhood LOL's sustainability has been demonstrated through four years of consistent programming on a volunteer-run, low-budget model. However, the program's current sustainability architecture has significant vulnerabilities as it seeks to grow:

- **Founder-dependent model:** The program's existence and quality are heavily dependent on the founders personal commitment, relationships, and vision. Developing a co-leadership structure and broader organizational ownership is a critical sustainability priority.
- **In-kind dependency:** The program's current operating model relies heavily on Unity Design's pro bono services, Pepsi and Shamrock Foods' donations, and volunteer labor. These contributions are generous but not contractually guaranteed, creating sustainability risk.

Assets and opportunities for future growth include

- **Fiscal sponsorship strength:** The Albuquerque Community Foundation fiscal sponsorship provides administrative stability and a vehicle for receiving tax-deductible contributions, an important sustainability asset as the program seeks grant funding.
- **Community trust:** Brotherhood's reputation in Albuquerque's men's community is a durable asset. The program's approach to vulnerability, brotherhood, and community service has generated genuine loyalty among participants.

Recommendations for long-term sustainability include

- diversified funding (small grants, individual donors, corporate sponsorships)
- transition from volunteer-only to a hybrid staffing model
- formalization of in-kind partnerships through written agreements
- development of a co-leadership structure

Equity and Culture

Cultural Humility

Brotherhood LOL demonstrates cultural humility through a design that is grounded in community, dignity, and trust. Its focus on Black and Brown boys and men reflects an understanding that mentorship must be responsive to the specific structural barriers many participants face, including poverty, incarceration, housing instability, and

limited access to consistent male role models. Through Lifeing 101 and partnerships with organizations such as UNM Hospital and Boys & Girls Clubs, the program creates intentional spaces where young men can build connection, receive guidance, and see themselves reflected in positive leadership.

The program also challenges harmful expectations around masculinity by creating room for men to be honest, emotional, and mutually supportive without being diminished or judged. This is especially important for men of color, who are often expected to carry hardship silently. Brotherhood LOL meets men where they are while affirming that vulnerability, care, and accountability are strengths.

Its dignity-centered approach is central to the model. By affirming men as good and valuable, the program directly counters deficit-based narratives often placed on men experiencing isolation, housing instability, behavioral health challenges, or other forms of hardship. This foundation of inherent worth makes the work culturally responsive and trauma informed.

Brotherhood LOL is also rooted in the cultural and geographic landscape of Albuquerque. Its events are held in community-based spaces such as the African American Performing Arts Center at Expo New Mexico, Bosque School, and CNM, rather than settings that may feel institutional or stigmatizing. As a peer-founded and peer-led organization, it carries credibility that cannot be replicated through outside service delivery alone. Michael Silva's role as a community member, rather than a traditional service provider, strengthens the program's trust-based approach and reflects a model built with and for the men it serves.

Demographic and Geographic Adaptability

Brotherhood LOL demonstrates early adaptability across demographic, geographic, and partnership contexts:

- **Age range adaptability:** Brotherhood LOL reaches boys ages 11 to 19 through the Lifeing 101 partnership while also engaging professional and executive-level men through the Leaders of Leaders Circle. This range reflects an understanding that isolation, disconnection, and the need for mentorship can emerge at different stages of life.
- **Socioeconomic range:** The program engages men facing significant life challenges through its broader fellowship programming while also creating space for successful professionals to serve as mentors, advocates, and community leaders. This structure helps build relationships across class and professional experience, expanding the circle of support available to participants.
- **Geographic adaptability:** Interest in launching a Taos chapter suggests that the model may be adaptable beyond Albuquerque. Taos presents a different community context, with a smaller population, distinct cultural assets, significant Latino and Indigenous communities, high levels of poverty, and more limited formal service infrastructure. Brotherhood LOL's community-anchored design may be well suited for smaller New Mexico communities where trust, relationships, and low-barrier participation are especially important.
- **Partnership-based reach:** Brotherhood LOL expands its reach through existing institutions such as Robinson House Behavioral Health, UNM Hospital, and Boys & Girls Clubs. This allows the model to connect with communities these partners already serve while adapting its work to different settings and participant needs.

Program Improvement and Funding

Program Improvements

- Implement pre/post participant surveys
- Develop consistent attendance tracking

- Co-leadership development:
- Strategic planning
- Seek out partnership with local homeless service providers
- Replication Toolkit

Policy and Funding Considerations

Small foundation grants: New Mexico-based foundations including the McCune Charitable Foundation, the Thornburg Foundation, and the New Mexico Community Foundation support grassroots community organizations and men's health/wellness initiatives. Brotherhood's mission, volunteer model, and community track record make it a strong candidate for small grants in the $5,000 to $25,000 range to support data infrastructure, mentorship program formalization, and chapter development.

Individual donor development: As a fiscally sponsored project of the Albuquerque Community Foundation, Brotherhood can receive tax-deductible individual donations. A structured individual donor campaign could generate meaningful unrestricted revenue.

Corporate sponsorship: Albuquerque-based corporations with community investment portfolios could be solicited for cash sponsorships of the Brotherhood Social and Summer Cookout, reducing event costs and freeing resources for program development.

New Mexico Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention funding: Brotherhood's mentorship work with Black and Brown boys aligns with state and federal juvenile justice prevention funding priorities. As the mentorship program formalizes and generates outcome data, this funding stream becomes increasingly accessible.

Mental health and prevention funding: New Mexico's Behavioral Health Services Division and the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) fund community-based prevention programs. As Brotherhood develops pre/post survey data demonstrating mental health outcomes, these streams become more accessible.

Technical Assistance

The program would benefit from targeted technical assistance in several areas:

Survey instrument development: Assistance selecting or adapting a validated survey instrument appropriate for Brotherhood's participant population and program goals and developing an administration protocol for the 4th Annual Brotherhood Social launch.

Strategic planning facilitation: A facilitated strategic planning process to help Brotherhood define its theory of change, prioritize program components, set measurable goals, and develop a resource acquisition strategy.

Grant writing support: Assistance identifying and applying for small foundation grants that match Brotherhood's current stage of development and mission, including support for developing a compelling narrative that connects the program's men's wellness model to homelessness prevention outcomes.

Mentorship program design: Guidance on best-practice mentorship program design, including mentor training curricula, match protocols, session structures, and outcome measurement frameworks adapted for Brotherhood's volunteer-led model.

Nonprofit development pathway: Help Brotherhood LOL prepare for independent nonprofit status by identifying the governance, financial, administrative, and compliance steps needed for a successful transition.

Data Capacity Recommendations

To develop Brotherhood LOL's evidence base from its current early stage to a level suitable for promising practice designation, the following data capacity investments are recommended as a phased approach:

Immediate Needs

- Implement brief pre/post survey at Brotherhood Social measuring social connectedness, loneliness, and sense of belonging
- Implement sign-in sheets at all program activities to track attendance, first-time vs. returning participant status, and basic demographics
- Document all active mentorship relationships with start date, frequency, and participant demographics

Short Term Considerations

- Develop a simple annual participant tracking system linking individuals across multiple program touchpoints (Brotherhood Social, Breakfast Club, cookout, mentorship)
- Conduct a structured qualitative assessment using focus group or interviews, with long-term Brotherhood participants to document impact narratives systematically
- Establish baseline metrics for all program components to enable year-over-year comparison

Long Term Considerations

- Explore partnership with a university research partner (UNM, CNM, or NMSU) for a formal program evaluation study
- Develop a longitudinal tracking system for mentorship participants (youth mentees) to document outcomes over 12 to 24 months
- Connect Brotherhood participant data to community-level homelessness and mental health outcome data to build the case for prevention impact

Total Program Cost

Annual Direct Cash Costs

Item	Cost
Brotherhood Social, food and beverage	$267.31
Brotherhood Social, venue rental (Expo New Mexico, African American Performing Arts Center)	$2,400.59
Brotherhood Social total	$2,667.90
Summer Cookout (supplies, misc.)	$1,200 (approx.)
Total annual direct cash costs	$3,868 (approx.)

Total Estimated Program Investment: $22,000 to $24,000 annually, combining the direct cash costs above with in-kind contributions (detailed under Resources and Constraints).

Cost Context: Brotherhood LOL's cost structure reflects the extraordinary leverage achieved through volunteer commitment and in-kind partnerships. At approximately $3,868 in direct annual costs, the program delivers year-round fellowship programming, an annual flagship event, a growing mentorship initiative, and a digital community presence. Per-participant cost analysis is not yet possible given the absence of formal attendance tracking but is a recommended development for Year 2 data infrastructure.

Centro Sávila

High-Fidelity Wraparound (HFW) Program

Program Overview

Program Snapshot

Program Name	High-Fidelity Wraparound (HFW) Program
Operated By	The Sávila Collaborative DBA Centro Sávila
Organization	A bilingual, bicultural behavioral health and social service organization
Service Area	South Valley and International District of Albuquerque, New Mexico

Staffing

Core Team, Spring 2026

Role	Count
Wraparound Supervisor/Coach	1
Wraparound Facilitators	2
Family/Youth Peer Case Manager	1
Community Engagement Group Facilitator	1
Billing Specialist	1
Wrap Coordinator	1

Supporting Administrative and Clinical Staff

Role	Allocation
Clinical Director, Fernanda Ferrer-Hernández	50% FTE
Clinical Supervisor, Rilke Crane	50% FTE
Executive Director, Dr. William Wagner, PhD, LCSW	25% FTE
Deputy Director, Finance Director, and Compliance Director*	25% FTE each

**Allocated to the wraparound program to support implementation and operations.*

Program Design and Operations

Intended Outcomes

High-Fidelity Wraparound is a structured, evidence-based care coordination model developed and certified through the New Mexico Credentialing Board for Behavioral Health Professionals. At Centro Sávila, it is delivered within a broader integrated behavioral health and social services infrastructure, which distinguishes it from programs that provide wraparound in isolation. The program's core assets are its certified, bilingual wraparound facilitators and supervisors, together with deep, established community relationships across the South Valley and International District.

Funding Sources

Source	Amount	Timeline
CYFD Funding	$2,297,948.40	24 months
RFK Charter School MOU	$225,000	25/26 School Year
Projected Medicaid Reimbursement	$403,000	FY26

Core Activities

Day to day, facilitators carry out a coordinated set of activities for each family:

- Comprehensive strengths-based assessment using the Child and Adolescent Needs and Strengths (CANS) tool
- Development of individualized, family-driven care plans with unified goals across all systems
- Facilitation of wraparound team meetings that include natural supports, family, extended family, and community members, alongside formal providers
- Active case coordination across behavioral health, education, housing, immigration, and social services
- Regular fidelity monitoring via the Team Observation Measure and Wraparound Fidelity Index
- Intensive on-call coverage and crisis response in the community
- Warm handoffs and continuum-of-care transitions when youth exit the program

Intended Outcomes

These activities are designed to produce a clear set of outcomes for youth and families:

- Reduced behavioral crises and school disruptions
- Improved family communication, cohesion, and self-advocacy
- Youth maintained in the least restrictive, most community-integrated settings
- Increased navigation of complex systems such as healthcare, immigration, education, and housing
- Transition to Medicaid-funded sustainability without dependence on grant dollars

The program's theory of change is grounded in the principle that when families are genuinely empowered as the architects of their own care, and when that care is linguistically accessible, culturally grounded, and coordinated across systems, youth remain in their communities and avoid higher-cost interventions such as residential placement or incarceration.

Populations Served

The wraparound program primarily serves children and youth from birth through age 18 and their families in the South Valley and International District of Albuquerque, with particular focus on transition-age youth between 16

and 21. It prioritizes young people at risk of disrupting from a community placement into a residential, juvenile justice, or child welfare setting, along with families navigating multiple intersecting challenges, among them behavioral health needs, housing instability, immigration complexity, poverty, and trauma.

This population sits at the center of New Mexico's most pressing challenges. The state has among the highest rates of child poverty, adverse childhood experiences, and youth behavioral health need in the nation, and in Bernalillo County's South Valley, mixed-status immigrant families face additional barriers, among them fear of systems, language access gaps, and exclusion from federal housing and benefit programs. Centro Sávila's wraparound model is built specifically for this community rather than adapted from an existing urban service model.

Demographic Profile of Wraparound Clients Served, April 2026

Across the 11 clients served to date, the profile reflects a young, predominantly male, and largely Hispanic/Latino population enrolled in Medicaid:

Category	Profile
Age range	6 to 16 years
Most common ages	9 to 16 (91% of clients)
Primary language	Spanish for several clients; bilingual services are standard
Housing	Private residences, shelters, and other arrangements
Insurance	Medicaid (Presbyterian Centennial, BCBS Centennial, Molina, CYFD Payor)

Gender

Gender	Share
Male	73%
Female	27%

Race and Ethnicity

Race and Ethnicity	Share
Hispanic/Latino	45%
Multi-racial	9%
White/Non-Hispanic	9%
Not reported	36%

Evidence and Data

Quantitative Indicators

Program Reach, October 2025 to April 2026

Since the program launched, 11 youth have enrolled in the program. Of those, 7 remain active and 3 have been discharged, with one additional record attributable to a clerical error. Average enrollment runs 93 days across all clients and 104 days for discharged clients, exceeding the CYFD performance target of 90 days. Enrolled youth range in age from 6 to 16, with most between 10 and 14, and the group is 73% male and 27% female.

CYFD Contract Performance, Total Clients Served Monthly

The CYFD contract sets a Year 1 target of 100 clients across all services. Monthly totals climbed steadily over the first half of the year, a net increase of 75% from October through March:

Month	Total Clients Served
October 2025	41
November 2025	64
December 2025	64
January 2026	48
February 2026	54
March 2026	72

Financial and Sustainability Indicators

Indicator	Period	Value
CYFD Contract	Oct 2024 to Sept 2026	$2,297,948.40
Medicaid Revenue (Projected)	FY26	$403,072.82
Medicaid Revenue (Projected)	FY27	$660,480.71
Medicaid Revenue (Projected)	FY28	$850,044.66
Operating Margin	FY26	+$17,354
Operating Margin	FY27	+$166,144
Operating Margin	FY28	+$162,385
Caseload at Full Capacity	Year 1	16 active cases, 2 facilitators
Caseload at Full Capacity	Year 3	35 active cases

Derived Cost Metrics

CYFD cost per client served is approximately $7,660 across roughly 300 unduplicated clients, covering comprehensive wraparound and behavioral health services. The wraparound-specific cost per enrolled youth is approximately $17,167 at 11 served, based on a Year 1 budget of approximately $188,851 for the wraparound

portion of the FY25 contract, and is expected to decrease substantially as Medicaid revenue increases and caseloads grow. Estimated Wraparound Medicaid revenue is approximately $1,996 per month for a facilitator caseload of six.

Training Completion

The team has invested heavily in building its own capacity. Since July 2025, staff have completed more than 20 distinct trainings in High-Fidelity Wraparound and trauma-informed care, and Wraparound Supervisor Herendida Foster earned CANS certification in February 2026. Two additional facilitators, Cindy Moreno and Collette Chavez, began Foundations Training in March 2026 and are expected to complete certification by March 2027.

Impact and Data Maturity

The program's data maturity is best described as emerging. Centro Sávila launched the program in Summer 2025 and has fewer than 12 months of operational data, so all quantitative indicators should be read as early-stage and directional rather than confirmatory.

What the Data Shows

Even at this early stage, several signals are encouraging:

- Consistent enrollment growth demonstrates community receptiveness and successful outreach in communities that have historically distrusted formal systems
- Average enrollment duration above 90 days meets the CYFD benchmark in the program's first year
- The Medicaid billing trajectory shows a credible path to financial sustainability, a major policy goal for New Mexico's behavioral health infrastructure
- Monthly report narratives capture rich qualitative impact, including school re-enrollment, improved family communication, and navigation of immigration and housing systems, that quantitative metrics alone would miss

What the Data Does Not Yet Show

Several measures remain to be developed:

- Fidelity scores from the Team Observation Measure and Wraparound Fidelity Index, which are required CYFD metrics and are not yet systematically reported
- Recidivism to higher levels of care such as residential placement or juvenile justice, a key long-term outcome that is not yet measured
- Pre- and post-measures of youth behavioral health symptoms, school attendance, and family functioning using standardized instruments
- Comparative data against a control or comparison group

The program's data infrastructure is appropriate for its developmental stage. Centro Sávila maintains an electronic medical record system with HIPAA-compliant demographic, encounter, and outcome data, and encounter-level data quality is expected to improve substantially as Medicaid billing matures.

Internal Tracking

Centro Sávila uses a HIPAA-compliant Electronic Medical Record system to support program tracking, service documentation, and reporting. The system captures key client information, including age, gender, race and ethnicity, language, insurance status, housing status, and zip code. It also tracks High-Fidelity Wraparound

enrollment and discharge dates, service encounters, referral sources and destinations, and staff training records reported quarterly to CYFD.

For High-Fidelity Wraparound, Centro Sávila maintains several additional records. These include Child and Adolescent Needs and Strengths assessments, wraparound team meeting documentation, facilitator training and certification records, and CANS certification records. The program also submits monthly and quarterly narrative reports to CYFD Behavioral Health Services.

Centro Sávila is implementing two fidelity measurement tools required under its CYFD contract: the Team Observation Measure and the Wraparound Fidelity Index. Once fully implemented, these tools will strengthen the program's ability to assess model fidelity, monitor quality, and use internal data to support continuous improvement.

Local Successes

Monthly reports from October 2025 through March 2026 document a consistent pattern of qualitative success across several areas.

School Re-engagement

One youth on the verge of grade retention following a long-term suspension was guided through a charter school tour and re-enrollment process by his wraparound facilitator. He returned to school on track and was connected to ongoing case management at Centro Sávila after discharge, demonstrating the program's commitment to continuity of care beyond formal wraparound enrollment.

Family Communication and School Stability

A Spanish-dominant family whose youth was experiencing behavioral disruptions at school saw a turnaround after the bilingual wraparound facilitator opened direct communication between the family and the school. The school adjusted the student's schedule, and the youth had not been sent home in several weeks as of the March 2026 report.

System Navigation

High-Fidelity Wrap Around and case management staff have helped clients with asylum application referrals to the New Mexico Immigrant Law Center, court accompaniment, driver's license acquisition, Social Security number applications, GED enrollment, college application navigation, and rental assistance access. These social-determinants-of-health interventions are built into every care plan.

Growing Caseload with Stable Quality

The active caseload grew from 2 wraparound families in October 2025 to 9 in February 2026, a 350% increase over five months. No adverse events or quality concerns were documented in monthly reports during this period of growth.

Scalability and Sustainability

Replicability

The New Mexico High-Fidelity Wraparound model is itself a standardized, nationally recognized framework, with detailed guidance in the state's HFW Program Manual and Provider Implementation Guide. Centro Sávila's distinct contribution is demonstrating how to deliver that model to a bilingual, immigrant-serving community in a mid-sized Southwestern city, within an integrated behavioral health organization.

For another New Mexico organization to replicate the model, several elements must be in place:

- Provider certification for wraparound through the New Mexico Credentialing Board for Behavioral Health Professionals
- Completion of wraparound Foundations Training through CYFD and the Center of Innovation New Mexico
- Bilingual Spanish-English clinical and facilitation staff (or any other indicated language)
- Established community trust, which is the hardest element to build quickly
- An electronic medical record system capable of tracking CANS, encounter, and outcome data
- Medicaid enrollment and billing capacity

Replication is most feasible in communities with concentrated Spanish-speaking populations, existing safety-net behavioral health infrastructure, and a willingness to build a community-based rather than institutional model. It is not appropriate as a direct replication model for rural New Mexico without adaptation, since the South Valley's urban density enables the facilitator travel and school-based co-location that isolated rural counties cannot easily match.

Resources and Constraints

A minimum viable wraparound team in Year 1 carries the following staffing and budget requirements:

Role or Line Item	Estimated Cost
1 Wraparound Supervisor/Coach	$78,000
2 Wraparound Facilitators	$124,000
0.5 FTE Clinical Director oversight	$49,955
Administrative support for billing and compliance	$10,000
Fringe benefits	$199,295
Year 1 total wraparound budget, including 10% overhead	$507,375

The model also carries several structural constraints:

- **Bilingual facilitator pipeline:** Albuquerque has a limited pool of certified or certifiable bilingual wraparound facilitators, and training takes 12 to 18 months to reach certification
- **Medicaid credentialing lag:** the time between hiring and a first billable claim can run 90 to 120 days, which requires bridge funding
- **High-intensity model:** facilitators carry small caseloads of 6 to 9 active families, so this is not a high-throughput model and should not be expected to serve large numbers with small teams
- **Referral-to-Enrollment:** Trust-building in immigrant communities cannot be rushed, so referral-to-enrollment timelines may run longer than in programs that do not serve immigrant families

Scalability

Centro Sávila's three-year sustainability budget models a clear scaling trajectory, growing the facilitator team and caseload alongside rising Medicaid revenue:

Year	Facilitators	Target Caseload	Medicaid Revenue
Year 1 (FY26)	2	16	$403,000
Year 2 (FY27)	3	30	$661,000
Year 3 (FY28)	4	35+	$850,000

The financial projections show the program covering its operating costs in Year 1, with an estimated remaining balance of approximately $17,000. The projected remaining balance increases to approximately $166,000 in Year 2 and $162,000 in Year 3. These projections depend on the program serving the expected number of families and maintaining consistent Medicaid billing.

Program growth must remain aligned with the High-Fidelity Wraparound model. The model relies on small caseloads, so expansion should not be achieved by assigning more families to each facilitator. Instead, growth would require hiring and training additional facilitators. This may be challenging because the program needs bilingual staff, and New Mexico continues to face workforce shortages across behavioral health services.

Sustainability

The program's sustainability is built around a planned transition from grant funding to Medicaid reimbursement. The CYFD contract requires Centro Sávila to bill all eligible High-Fidelity Wraparound services through Medicaid, and the three-year budget model shows Medicaid revenue covering program costs by Year 2. This includes salaries, benefits, and administrative costs. If billing targets are met, Medicaid reimbursement is expected to become the primary long-term funding source for the program.

Revenue is also diversified across several sources:

- **CYFD grant:** approximately $2.3 million across 24 months, serving as the primary launch funder
- **RFK Charter School MOU:** $225,000 for school-based services through FY2026
- **Medicaid reimbursement:** revenue through Centennial Care managed care organizations, including Presbyterian, BCBS, and Molina, with Medicaid expected to become the primary revenue source by FY2027
- **Internal emergency fund:** client assistance funding maintained by the organization, reflecting Centro Sávila's financial resilience and ability to respond to urgent family needs

Centro Sávila's organizational stability also supports sustainability. The organization has operated in the South Valley for more than a decade and has established relationships with schools, immigrant-serving networks, healthcare providers, and social service partners. Because the High-Fidelity Wraparound program is housed within an established community-based organization, it is better positioned to continue beyond the initial grant period.

Equity and Culture

Cultural Humility

Centro Sávila's wraparound program was not adapted from a mainstream model to serve Hispanic communities; it was built from the ground up to serve them. Cultural humility is embedded at several levels.

Language as a Right, Not an Accommodation

All direct service staff are bilingual Spanish-English speakers, and wraparound facilitation, therapy, case management, and administrative communication are conducted in Spanish as standard practice. For clients whose primary language is neither Spanish nor English, such as Indigenous-language speakers and refugees, the program budgets approximately $2,025 per month for contract interpreter services. Language access is treated not as optional but as a prerequisite for genuine family participation in care planning.

Immigration-Competent Practice

A defining feature of the model is its explicit focus on mixed-status immigrant families, households that often include both U.S.-citizen children and undocumented family members. Staff are trained in immigration-related trauma, in how documentation status intersects with housing access and benefit eligibility, and in the specific fears that keep families from engaging with formal systems. This population is systematically underserved by mainstream behavioral health, and Centro Sávila has built the organizational trust needed to reach them.

Wraparound as a Culturally Resonant Model

The wraparound model's emphasis on natural supports, extended family, community members, and spiritual advisors, aligns with Hispanic familismo values and with Indigenous collective-care practices. In communities where individual therapy may feel foreign or stigmatized, a model that explicitly involves the family network in care planning reduces stigma and increases engagement.

Community-Based Location

Services are delivered in clients' homes, schools, and community spaces rather than in an office or clinic. This matters in the South Valley and International District, where the lack of a car, license, or insurance and demanding work schedules make clinic-based services inaccessible to many families. The high-desert geography of Albuquerque, with its spread-out neighborhoods, limited public transit, and extreme summer heat, makes community-based delivery not just culturally preferable but practically necessary.

Demographic and Geographic Adaptability

Geographic Adaptations

Facilitators conduct home visits across the South Valley and International District, an area of roughly 10 square miles with limited public transit, supported by a mileage budget that grows from about $3,600 in Year 1 to $9,000 by Year 3. School-based services are co-located at RFK Charter School's middle and high school campuses, reducing transportation barriers for students and families who cannot reach a clinic. On-call coverage provides community-based crisis response that keeps youth out of emergency departments and reduces involvement in the juvenile justice system, a particular concern in New Mexico given its high rates of youth justice involvement.

Demographic Adaptations

The wraparound team builds care plans that account for immigration status, connecting families to the New Mexico Immigrant Law Center, providing letters of support for asylum applications, and helping them navigate systems that many find intimidating or dangerous. For the two transgender youth enrolled in wraparound, the program's affirming approach, including correct pronouns and gender-affirming language, is documented in case records. When families are multilingual, for example Spanish-dominant parents with English-dominant youth, facilitators bridge communication within the family, not only between the family and outside systems. The organization also offers Abriendo Puertas, a nationally evidence-based Spanish-language early-childhood curriculum that complements wraparound for families with younger children, reflecting its capacity to wrap multiple culturally grounded services around a single family.

Program Improvement and Funding

Program Improvements

Several improvements are actively underway or identified as priorities:

- **Fidelity monitoring:** formal Team Observation Measure and Wraparound Fidelity Index scoring is required by CYFD but not yet reported in available data, and operationalizing these tools is the single highest priority for program quality
- **Facilitator pipeline:** two new facilitators completed Foundations Training in March 2026, and building a sustainable pipeline of bilingual, certified facilitators is a long-term organizational investment
- **Pre- and post-outcome measurement:** the program lacks standardized instruments for youth behavioral health symptoms and family functioning, and adding validated measures such as the Child and Adolescent Functional Assessment Scale, the Columbia Impairment Scale, or the CANS used longitudinally would strengthen the evidence base
- **School-based expansion:** the CYFD contract calls for expansion to at least three Bernalillo County schools by Year 2, and the RFK MOU currently serves two campuses, so additional agreements are needed
- **Fortaleciendo Familias group program:** this evidence-based middle-school family program is contracted but not yet fully launched, and expanding it would complement the program's intensive case coordination
- **Discharge planning protocol:** the program already demonstrates strong continuum-of-care practices informally, such as connecting discharged youth to case management, and formalizing a discharge checklist would make this replicable

Policy and Funding Considerations

Federal Policy Risk

Proposed changes to public housing assistance for mixed-status families, specifically provisions that would deny housing support to any household including an undocumented member even when U.S.-citizen children are present, directly threaten the stability of families this program serves. Housing instability is both a driver and a consequence of the behavioral health challenges wraparound addresses, so federal rollbacks in this area would increase need while shrinking the safety net. Separately, Medicaid policy changes such as potential work requirements or redetermination rule changes under federal budget discussions could reduce Centennial Care enrollment among the program's clients, lowering Medicaid revenue and increasing uncompensated care.

State Policy Opportunity

New Mexico's continued investment in community-based, culturally responsive behavioral health, reflected in this CYFD contract, positions the state to build on wraparound as a model for other populations, including Native youth in pueblos and rural communities and unhoused young adults. Expanding wraparound certification capacity through CYFD Behavioral Health Services and the Center of Innovation New Mexico would enable more providers to launch certified programs.

Technical Assistance

The program would benefit from targeted technical assistance in several areas:

- **Medicaid billing optimization:** as the program shifts toward greater Medicaid dependence, support with claims submission, managed-care contracting, and billing for wraparound codes would reduce revenue leakage
- **Data system integration:** help connecting the electronic medical record to CYFD's reporting requirements and to the Center of Innovation New Mexico's wraparound outcome tracking platform

- **Fidelity coaching:** access to state-certified wraparound coaches for ongoing Team Observation Measure and Wraparound Fidelity Index review, particularly as new facilitators complete training
- **Evaluator partnership:** a formal evaluation partnership would accelerate evidence building
- **Peer learning network:** connection to other state-certified wraparound providers for cross-site learning, particularly on engaging immigrant families

Data Capacity Recommendations

To strengthen the program's evidence base, five data-capacity steps are recommended:

- Implement systematic Team Observation Measure and Wraparound Fidelity Index scoring at every wraparound team meeting, recorded in the electronic medical record or a dedicated tracking spreadsheet and reported quarterly to CYFD
- Add a standardized functional outcome measure at enrollment, 90 days, and discharge; the CANS, already used for Medicaid eligibility, can serve this purpose if scored at multiple time points and tracked over time
- Develop an unduplicated client count across all CYFD-funded services and track program participants separately from the broader caseload to enable cleaner program-specific analysis
- Create a discharge outcome tracker recording where each youth goes after leaving the program, whether to case management, community services, no services, residential care, or juvenile justice, since this single data point would powerfully illustrate the program's diversion impact
- Disaggregate outcomes by language preference, immigration status where permitted under HIPAA, and school status to document equity-specific impacts

Funding Diversity

Centro Sávila's current funding portfolio spans three sources, transitioning from grant launch support toward earned Medicaid revenue:

Source	Amount	Role
CYFD Behavioral Health Services	$2,297,948.40	Primary funder; startup and launch investment
RFK Charter School	$225,000	Fee-for-service agreement for school-based behavioral health
Medicaid / Centennial Care	$403K in FY26, growing to $850K by FY28	Targeted primary sustainable revenue source

Assessment: The program is appropriately transitioning from grant dependence to earned revenue through Medicaid. The CYFD contract functions as a launch subsidy for a program designed to become self-sustaining, a strong and intentional funding strategy. The main vulnerability is the 12 to 18-month gap between facilitator hiring and full Medicaid billing capacity, which requires cash reserve or bridge funding.

Total Program Cost

The full CYFD contract is valued at $2,297,948.40 over its two-year term, distributed across three funding periods:

Breakdown by Contract Period

Contract Period	Amount
FY25, Oct 2024 to Apr 2025	$361,235.42
FY25 extension, May to Jun 2025	$188,850.95
FY26, Jul 2025 to Jun 2026	$1,747,862.03

The wraparound-specific operating cost, drawn from the program's sustainability model, rises each year as the team and caseload grow:

Annual Wraparound Operating Cost

Year	Total Cost with Overhead
Year 1 (FY26)	$385,718
Year 2 (FY27)	$494,336
Year 3 (FY28)	$687,660

Per-client cost falls sharply as the caseload grows. Year 1 reflects startup costs spread across only 11 clients, while Year 3 distributes a larger budget across a full caseload:

Derived Cost Per Client

Scenario	Clients	Program Cost Estimate	Estimated Cost per Client
Year 1	11	$385,718	$35,065
Year 3	35	$687,660	$19,647

The projected cost structure supports the case for High-Fidelity Wraparound as a cost-conscious intervention. As the program reaches full capacity, the estimated cost per client decreases from approximately $35,000 in the startup year to under $20,000. This reflects the higher costs associated with launching the program, training staff, and building service capacity during the first year.

These projected costs are substantially lower than many of the higher-cost placements the model is intended to help prevent, including residential treatment, psychiatric hospitalization, and juvenile detention. The program does not need to prevent every out-of-home placement to demonstrate value. Even a modest reduction in the use of more intensive placements can offset a significant portion of program costs.

For youth and families, the value is not only financial. High-Fidelity Wraparound is designed to keep young people connected to their homes, schools, families, and communities while coordinating the services needed to stabilize care. When paired with a transition to Medicaid reimbursement, the model presents a strong case for both public investment and long-term sustainability.

Code Blue Emergency Cold Weather Response

CITY OF SANTA FE COMMUNITY SERVICES DEPARTMENT

Program Overview

Program Snapshot

Program Name	Code Blue Emergency Cold Weather Response Program
Operated By	City of Santa Fe Community Services Department
Division	Youth and Family Services Division

Staffing

The program is led by a single dedicated program manager, Kristen Woods of the Youth and Family Services Division, who is responsible for planning, coordination, and activation oversight. Operations are carried out through a multi-agency Incident Support Model that draws personnel from across City departments and community partner organizations, including the Santa Fe Fire Department, Santa Fe Police Department, the Office of Emergency Management, Park Rangers, Transit, and partner nonprofits.

During an activation, staff cover a defined set of functions:

- Activation coordination
- Street outreach
- Transportation logistics
- Shelter operations management
- Narcan distribution
- Wellness checks
- Referral services
- Public communications

Program Design and Operations

Intended Outcomes

Code Blue is built on a theory of change grounded in emergency-management principles and harm reduction. When the National Weather Service signals dangerous cold, the program activates a coordinated, multi-agency response that meets unsheltered people where they are, transports them to safety, and provides shelter, food, and wellness support. By removing subjectivity from activation and reaching people proactively, the program engages individuals who might otherwise distrust or be unable to access traditional shelter.

The intended outcomes are zero cold-weather deaths among unsheltered individuals, fewer emergency medical calls during activations, greater access to wraparound services, and replicable institutional knowledge that strengthens the response to future emergencies.

Populations Served

Code Blue prioritizes unsheltered individuals in Santa Fe living outdoors or in vehicles during extreme cold. The population it reaches mirrors the broader demographics of homelessness in New Mexico, and the 2025 to 2026 season served several distinct groups:

Population	Served in 2025 to 2026	Context
Veterans	26	The largest identified sub-population; northern New Mexico has deeply rooted veteran communities spanning Vietnam, the Gulf War, and post-9/11 service
Seniors	20	A group at heightened risk of hypothermia in a state with one of the highest rates of senior poverty in the nation
Individuals with physical disabilities	7	Reflecting the intersection of disability and housing insecurity prevalent statewide
Youth	1	Small in number but uniquely vulnerable to trafficking risk and lack of familial support

The program also reaches individuals living with mental health conditions and substance use disorders who may distrust or struggle to access traditional services, addressing those needs directly through Narcan distribution and co-located referrals. Throughout, the design reflects an understanding of the cultural, historical, and systemic factors that shape homelessness in New Mexico, among them intergenerational poverty, limited rural service infrastructure, and distrust of government systems in some communities.

Evidence and Data

Quantitative Indicators

Code Blue tracks a consistent set of indicators across every activation, reported in aggregate at the end of each season to enable year-over-year comparison and trend analysis. Tracked measures include:

- Planned activation days compared with actual activation days
- Primary shelter capacity, measured as total beds available by site
- Demographic breakdowns of stays across veterans, seniors, individuals with physical disabilities, and youth
- Outreach contacts and locations visited
- Meals served
- Cold-weather kit inventory and number of kits distributed
- Passengers transported to shelter
- Emergency medical transports, distinguished by acuity level
- Unattended deaths during the activation period
- Shelter and feeding costs under the contract, and kit inventory value compared with distribution value

Impact and Data Maturity

The Winter 2025 to 2026 season produced strong results across the program's core measures:

Result	Measure	What It Shows
Zero deaths	No unattended deaths during any activation	The program's primary life-safety outcome was achieved
4 EMS transports	All low acuity	Early intervention appears to have prevented severe medical emergencies
167 transport trips	Across 6 activation days	Reached people who may not have accessed shelter on their own
350 meals served	During activations	Addressed acute food insecurity among sheltered individuals
63 cold-weather kits	21% of inventory	A harm-reduction measure extending protection beyond shelter walls
45 outreach locations	Across 6 activation days	Broad geographic coverage of known encampment and congregation sites

Internal Tracking

The City of Santa Fe tracks activation data in real time and compiles aggregate seasonal reports. The data collected includes planned versus actual activation days, bed counts by shelter site, demographic breakdowns by sub-population, outreach location logs, meals served, kit inventory and distribution counts, transportation and emergency medical transport records, and mortality data. All data is de-identified and available for sharing with evaluators.

Local Successes

The 2025 to 2026 season demonstrates that Code Blue achieved measurable local impact while staying focused on its central goal of preventing cold-weather deaths among unsheltered residents. Most notably, there were no deaths among unsheltered individuals during Code Blue activations. This outcome reflects the core purpose of the program, which is to reduce immediate danger during severe winter weather by connecting people to shelter, transportation, meals, and emergency support.

The program also demonstrated strong operational reach. Across 6 activation days, 167 individuals were transported to shelter, averaging nearly 28 people per activation day. This level of transportation support is significant for a mid-sized city and reflects the importance of direct outreach, especially for individuals who are not located near shelter sites or who face barriers to reaching shelter on their own. Code Blue also reached 26 veterans during the season, indicating that the program connected with a population that may benefit from targeted outreach and service coordination.

The season also shows responsible planning and use of public resources. Although the program was budgeted for 15 activation days based on historical weather patterns, it activated for 6 days in response to actual conditions. Emergency supply use was also measured, with 21 percent of kit inventory distributed and the remaining supplies available for future activations. This shows that the City prepared for potential need while limiting deployment to periods when severe weather conditions required a response.

Taken together, these outcomes indicate that Code Blue provided a focused and practical response to severe winter weather. The program prevented cold-weather deaths during activation periods, transported residents to shelter, reached vulnerable subpopulations, and preserved resources for future use.

Scalability and Sustainability

Replicability

Code Blue is highly replicable across New Mexico and other states, particularly for small and mid-sized cities and counties that have unsheltered populations and extreme winter weather. Several factors make it portable:

- **Objective trigger mechanism:** using publicly available National Weather Service data removes subjective judgment from activation decisions, and other communities can adapt the temperature threshold, currently 15 degrees Fahrenheit, to their own climate risk. Lower thresholds may suit southern communities such as Las Cruces, while higher-elevation areas such as Taos or Raton may need earlier triggers
- **Pre-existing partner infrastructure:** the program leverages existing nonprofits and faith-based organizations rather than creating new entities, lowering startup costs and drawing on established community trust, which matters in New Mexico where tribal, Hispanic, and rural communities often have stronger ties to local faith and community organizations than to government agencies
- **Emergency-management framework:** applying the Incident Support Model to a homelessness response creates a structure familiar to emergency managers statewide and enables rapid scale-up during larger events
- **Tiered shelter model:** pre-identifying facilities of different sizes, such as Warehouse 21 at 58 beds and Agape House at 15 beds, lets the response match event severity without over-committing resources

Replication requires pre-season relationship-building with partners, executed memoranda of understanding, identified shelter sites, and procured kit inventory. These are one-time setup investments that lower the cost of ongoing operations.

Resources and Constraints

The direct program costs for the Winter 2025 to 2026 season were modest:

Item	Cost
Shelter operations (contract)	$49,602
Feeding services and food (contract)	$3,000
Cold-weather kit full inventory value	$9,000
Value of kits distributed (21% of inventory)	$1,890
Total direct program costs	$53,500

Total direct program costs exclude staff time and overhead.

Beyond funding, the program depends on several non-financial requirements: a dedicated program manager for year-round planning and seasonal coordination, multi-agency relationships and signed memoranda of understanding with shelter operators and service nonprofits, transportation vehicles and drivers, shelter facilities with sufficient primary and overflow capacity, and the communications capacity to make timely public announcements.

It also carries several constraints:

- **The budget is based on historical weather averages, which may not reflect actual activation needs in unusual years, a real challenge given New Mexico's variable climate**
- **Seasonal activation means staff and partners must maintain readiness throughout the winter without continuous operational engagement**

- **Reliance on a single dedicated program manager creates succession-planning risk, so cross-training additional staff would strengthen program resilience**

Scalability

Code Blue has strong potential to expand both its reach and its response capacity. During the season reviewed, outreach teams covered 45 locations across 6 activation days. This demonstrates that the program already has a strong geographic foundation. As the locations of unsheltered residents shift over time or by season, the City can strengthen the model by identifying additional outreach zones in advance.

The program also has room to expand shelter capacity when conditions require it. Currently, Code Blue uses 2 primary shelter locations with a combined capacity of 73 beds. Future planning could include identifying overflow locations in advance, such as community centers, churches, gymnasiums, or schools. This approach is especially relevant in New Mexico, where faith communities and local organizations often play an active role in homelessness response.

The multi-agency Incident Support Model also supports expansion. Because the response brings together City departments and community partners under a coordinated structure, it can be expanded for longer activations, larger winter storms, or other emergencies that require temporary shelter, transportation, outreach, and rapid coordination. The same framework could also be adapted by counties or tribal nations, with adjustments for rural geography, transportation limitations, and community-specific service preferences.

Each activation builds institutional knowledge. Over time, the City strengthens its ability to coordinate partners, deploy staff, manage shelter capacity, transport residents, and respond quickly during emergencies. This makes Code Blue valuable not only as a cold-weather response, but also as a model for broader emergency preparedness.

Sustainability

Code Blue is well positioned for continued implementation because it is housed within the City of Santa Fe's emergency response structure and supported through municipal funding. This gives the program a stable foundation beyond a single grant cycle and allows it to be planned as part of the City's broader public safety and emergency preparedness responsibilities.

The use of formal service agreements for shelter and meal provision supports accountability and advance planning across activation seasons. These agreements help clarify roles, preserve service continuity, and ensure that key operational components are in place before severe weather occurs.

At $53,500 across six activations, the program operated at a reasonable cost in relation to its life-safety purpose. Because Code Blue is activated based on weather conditions, annual costs will vary depending on the number, length, and severity of winter weather events. This makes annual review of activation data, supply use, staffing needs, and partner capacity important for future planning.

To strengthen long-term implementation, the City may consider formalizing backup coordination capacity, maintaining a standing inventory of emergency supplies, and reviewing seasonal costs at the close of each winter response period. These steps would help preserve the program's current strengths while supporting responsible budgeting and readiness for future activations.

Equity and Culture

Cultural Humility

Code Blue reflects a responsive approach to emergency shelter and outreach. The program brings services directly to unsheltered residents rather than relying on individuals to locate and access shelter on their own. This is especially important during severe winter weather, when delays in engagement can create immediate safety risks.

The program's partnerships with Interfaith, Chaplain Joe's, St. Elizabeth's, and other community-based organizations strengthen its reach. These partners help connect the City's emergency response to organizations that already have relationships with vulnerable residents, including individuals who may be less likely to engage through government systems alone.

Code Blue also uses a flexible, harm-reduction approach. Wellness checks, Narcan distribution, transportation, emergency kits, and low-barrier shelter access allow the program to respond to immediate safety needs without creating unnecessary barriers to help. This flexibility is important for reaching people who may decline traditional shelter but still need protection during dangerous weather.

Transportation and emergency kit distribution further strengthen the program's ability to reach residents who face practical barriers to safety. Transportation helps reach people in outlying areas or those without reliable transit. Emergency kits provide a practical safety measure for individuals who cannot access shelter or choose not to enter shelter during an activation.

Areas for continued improvement include stronger documentation of language-access practices, review of service data by race and ethnicity where appropriate, and expanded engagement with tribal and Indigenous-serving organizations. These steps would strengthen the City's ability to assess who is being reached, identify service gaps, and continue improving Code Blue for Santa Fe's diverse unsheltered population.

Demographic and Geographic Adaptability

Code Blue demonstrates adaptability across both population needs and geographic conditions. The program tracks service use among veterans, seniors, individuals with physical disabilities, and youth. This allows the City to assess whether outreach and shelter services are reaching residents at heightened risk during severe winter weather. It also supports adjustments in outreach, transportation, shelter planning, and referrals based on who is being served and where gaps remain.

The program also includes individualized referral support. This is important because Code Blue is not limited to emergency shelter during cold weather events. It creates an entry point for connecting unsheltered residents to longer-term housing supports and related services.

Geographically, outreach teams cover 45 identified locations across Santa Fe, including areas that are not close to shelter sites. Transportation helps bridge that distance for residents in outlying areas. The two-site shelter model also gives the City flexibility to adjust capacity based on need.

The weather-based activation structure is another adaptable feature. Code Blue activates when temperatures fall below 15 degrees Fahrenheit or when a Winter Storm Warning is issued. This approach reflects the severe winter conditions common in northern New Mexico and can be adjusted for other communities based on local climate, elevation, geography, and available shelter capacity.

Program Improvement and Funding

Program Improvements

Based on the 2025 to 2026 season, several improvements are recommended:

- **Cross-training:** develop protocols so additional City staff can serve as backup coordinators, reducing dependence on a single manager and strengthening institutional resilience

- **Overflow site identification:** formally pre-qualify overflow shelter sites such as community centers, gyms, and houses of worship to expand capacity for larger or longer activations without real-time scrambling
- **Longitudinal client tracking:** explore opt-in mechanisms to follow shelter clients' housing outcomes after activation, documenting pathways from emergency shelter to stable housing
- **Language access:** formalize protocols for multilingual outreach and shelter communications, reflecting New Mexico's significant Spanish-speaking and Indigenous-language communities
- **Youth-specific protocols:** with only one youth served, assess whether outreach is effectively reaching youth experiencing homelessness, who may frequent different locations and need age-appropriate engagement
- **Tribal coordination:** pursue formal partnership or information-sharing agreements with tribal nations to improve coordination during extreme weather events affecting Indigenous community members in or near Santa Fe

Policy and Funding Considerations

Several policy and funding considerations bear on Code Blue's continued operation and expansion:

- **State emergency-management funding:** the program's Incident Support Model aligns with state and federal emergency-management frameworks, making it potentially eligible for the FEMA Hazard Mitigation Grant Program or state emergency-management funding as climate-driven extreme cold becomes more frequent
- **Continuum of Care alignment:** integrating with the Santa Fe Continuum of Care and the state's Homeless Management Information System would strengthen the program's ability to connect clients with longer-term housing and track outcomes across the service system
- **Statewide replication funding:** the New Mexico Office of Housing could establish a small grant program to help other municipalities and counties replicate the model, using Santa Fe's program as a technical-assistance resource
- **Flexible federal funding:** emergency response programs like Code Blue may qualify for American Rescue Plan Act homelessness funding or Community Development Block Grants, which offer flexible resources for municipal homelessness response
- **Multiyear budgeting:** shifting from annual appropriations to a multiyear budget cycle would improve planning stability and allow pre-season procurement at better prices

Technical Assistance

The City of Santa Fe has identified several technical-assistance needs:

- **Data systems:** help connecting activation-level tracking to the Homeless Management Information System or another shared platform to enable longitudinal outcome tracking and cross-program comparison
- **Evaluation framework:** support developing a formal evaluation framework that moves beyond outputs such as meals, transports, and beds toward outcomes such as housing stability, reduced emergency medical use, and shelter-to-housing placement rates
- **Replication toolkit:** assistance packaging protocols, memoranda of understanding, contract templates, and activation checklists so other New Mexico communities can adapt the model with minimal additional support

- **Workforce development:** guidance on training outreach staff who work with individuals who have complex behavioral health needs, trauma histories, and resistance to shelter, particularly relevant given New Mexico's shortage of behavioral health professionals

Data Capacity Recommendations

To strengthen its data infrastructure and maximize its value as a model, the program should pursue five steps:

- Integrate Code Blue shelter records with Santa Fe's Homeless Management Information System to track clients' subsequent service use, housing placements, and outcomes, transforming the program from output-focused to one with documented long-term impact
- Add race and ethnicity to demographic data collection to assess whether the program is equitably reaching all communities, including Indigenous and Hispanic individuals who may be underrepresented in shelter counts
- Develop a brief, standardized intake tool for shelter check-in that captures core demographic and needs data consistently across activations
- Establish baseline metrics from the first year of formal data collection and track year-over-year trends to document continuous improvement
- Formalize data-sharing agreements with partner agencies to enable aggregate analysis of service use across the full response system

Funding Diversity

Code Blue is funded primarily through the City of Santa Fe's Community Services Department budget. City general fund appropriations support core program costs, including shelter operations, meals, and emergency kit purchases. Partner agencies also contribute staff time and operational support that are not reflected in the program's direct cost totals.

There are clear opportunities to diversify:

- State of New Mexico homelessness response funding through the Office of Housing
- FEMA Hazard Mitigation or emergency-management grant programs
- HUD Emergency Solutions Grants, which fund emergency shelter and homelessness prevention
- Community Development Block Grants administered through the City
- Private foundation funding for specific components such as kit procurement or Narcan distribution

Diversifying funding would reduce dependence on annual municipal budget cycles and provide resources for expansion, evaluation, and replication support.

Total Program Cost

The full direct cost of the Winter 2025 to 2026 season breaks down as follows:

Item	Cost
Shelter operations (contract)	$49,602
Feeding services and food (contract)	$3,000
Cold-weather kit full inventory value	$9,000
Value of kits distributed (21% of inventory)	$1,890

Total direct program cost	$53,500

Total excludes staff time, overhead, and in-kind contributions from partner agencies.

Across six activations, the program's direct cost averaged approximately $8,917 per activation day. The program was originally budgeted for 15 activation days based on historical weather patterns. Activating for six days reflects the City's use of the program only when conditions required it, rather than spending the full allocation regardless of need. The remaining emergency kits, valued at approximately $7,110, will be carried forward for use next season and may reduce future procurement costs.

The season's results support the value of Code Blue as a promising practice. With $53,500 in direct costs, the program met its central life-safety goal of preventing cold-weather deaths. It also transported 167 people to safety, served 350 meals, and reached vulnerable residents, including veterans, seniors, and people with disabilities.

The program's broader value comes from its structure. Code Blue is embedded in the City's emergency-management system, supported across multiple departments, and carried out in partnership with trusted community organizations. This structure allows the City to respond quickly during severe weather while using public resources in a targeted and defensible way. For other New Mexico communities, Code Blue offers a practical model for protecting unsheltered residents during dangerous winter conditions.

Consuelo's Place Shelter

Non-Congregate Shelter with Wraparound Case Management

Program Overview

Program Snapshot

Program Name	Consuelo's Place Shelter, Non-Congregate Shelter with Wraparound Case Management
Operated By	Interfaith Community Shelter, 1600 St. Michael's Dr., Building 7, Santa Fe, NM 87505
Contact	Michele Williams, Executive Director | michele@consuelosplace.org | 505-577-0974
Program Status	Anticipating 501(c)(3) independence effective July 1, 2026, currently under Interfaith Community Shelter fiscal sponsorship

Budget Overview

Period	Amount
FY2025 to 2026 YFS award	$780,000
FY2025 to 2026 estimated total budget	$1,035,998
FY2026 to 2027 anticipated budget	$1,100,000

Staffing

Consuelo's Place operates with a staffing model built for around-the-clock coverage and intensive case management:

Role	Count	Function
Executive Director	1	Program leadership, funder relations, compliance, and strategic planning
Front Desk Manager	1	Front desk operations management
Front Desk Staff	8	24/7 coverage
Full-Time Case Managers	4	Service planning, housing readiness, discharge planning, and social-determinants coordination
Part-Time Case Manager	1	Domestic violence services

Every case manager is locally trained and certified through New Mexico credentialing programs, including the Certified Peer Support Worker and Certified Community Support Specialist credentials, ensuring that services are delivered through a consistently trauma-informed and culturally responsive practice. The organization has affirmed its readiness to support external evaluation, making two staff members available for interviews and data sharing and offering to host a one- to two-hour on-site visit.

Program Design and Operations

Intended Outcomes

Consuelo's Place operates a non-congregate shelter model with integrated wraparound case management. Non-congregate models provide temporary, private living spaces. The model is designed for individuals and families whose safety, health, disability-related, or trauma-related needs may not be appropriately served in a congregate shelter setting. Private rooms provide a stable environment where clients can safely engage in case management, housing planning, benefits navigation, medical coordination, and other support needed to move toward long-term housing.

The program uses shelter as a structured pathway to housing stability rather than as a short-term placement alone. Wraparound case management addresses the barriers that commonly prevent exits from homelessness, including income, documentation, health care access, disability-related needs, family stability, and connection to appropriate housing resources. The program also uses multiple housing exit pathways, allowing staff to match clients to the most appropriate available option rather than relying on a single placement strategy.

The program's intended outcomes include placing more than 64% (self-reported) of discharging clients in long-term housing, reducing emergency service use among medically fragile clients, improving stability for families with children, and supporting continued housing stability for clients placed through Permanent Supportive Housing, Linkages vouchers, and other housing pathways.

Populations Served

Population Counts

Category	Count
Adults	147
Children	70
Medical respite clients (per year)	40

Client Composition

Category	Share of Clients
Clients with underage children	55%
Clients age 55 or older	27%
Female head of household	29%
Single fathers	26%
Clients with a disabling condition	63%

The program serves individuals and families with significant safety, health, and housing stability needs. Clients range in age from newborns to 86 years old, reflecting the program's role in serving both individuals and families across the lifespan.

In a representative quarter of FY2025-2026, the program served 110 individuals. Client demographic data reflected:

- **Hispanic:** 60%
- **Non-Hispanic:** 40%
- **White:** 81 clients (74%)
- **American Indian or Alaska Native:** 14 clients (13%)
- **Black or African American:** 9 clients (8%)
- **Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander:** 2 clients (2%)
- **Multi-racial:** 4 clients (4%)

Across all reporting quarters, nearly all adult clients met HUD's Extremely Low-Income threshold, defined as income below 30% of Area Median Income. This confirms that the program is reaching individuals and families with the highest levels of economic need.

The non-congregate shelter model is well matched to the population served because it provides privacy, safety, and stability that are difficult to maintain in a congregate shelter setting. The model is especially important for:

- Survivors of domestic violence, sexual trauma, and human trafficking, who may need private rooms to reduce safety risks and avoid further trauma.
- Veterans, who may require individualized case management connected to benefits, health care, service-related needs, and long-term housing stability.
- LGBTQIA+ individuals, who may face discrimination, harassment, or safety concerns in shared shelter settings.
- Adults and families with disabilities, who represent 63% of clients and may need private space to support medical management, mobility, sensory needs, and reduced fall risk.
- Older adults, with 27% of clients over age 55, who may need a safer setting that supports stabilization, rest, and health-related needs.
- Families with children, who represent 55% of clients and benefit from private family units that support sleep, school routines, and child development.

Evidence and Data

Quantitative Indicators

Consuelo's Place has the data capacity needed to document program reach, client flow, housing outcomes, and cost. The program uses HMIS, Unite Us, and internal case management records to support reporting, monitor service activity, and track client movement through the shelter and housing-placement process.

Key FY2025 indicators include:

- **Daily Operating Census:** 75 to 90
- **Individuals Served Annually:** 218
- **Long Term Housing Placement Rate:** 64%
- **Average length of stay:** 223 to 276 days
- **Daily Cost Per Client:** $13.02
- **Approximate Annual cost:** $5,000 per client
- **Current City Funding:** 71% of program costs

These indicators show a program with established reporting systems, consistent service volume, measurable housing outcomes, and a clearly documented cost structure. The length-of-stay data also reflects the nature of the model. Consuelo's Place is not operating as a short-term overnight shelter; it is functioning as a non-congregate stabilization setting where clients may require extended time to complete documentation, benefits coordination, health-related stabilization, housing navigation, and placement planning.

Housing placements reflect multiple exit pathways, allowing clients to move into the housing option that best fits their needs and eligibility.

Discharge Destination	Share
Self-pay market rental	33%
Affordable unit (30 to 60% AMI)	17%
Permanent Supportive Housing	17%
Linkages Voucher	11%
Santa Fe County Housing Authority	8%
Nursing home or skilled care	8%
College	5%
Homeownership	1 person

Quarter	Persons Sheltered	Placed in Long-Term Housing	Exited Coordinated Entry
Q4 FY25 (Apr to Jun 2025)	103	14 (14%)	18 (17%)
Q1 FY25/26 (Jul to Sep 2025)	110	18 (16%)	26 (24%)
Q2 FY25/26 (Oct to Dec 2025)	115	14 (12%)	14 (12%)
Q3 FY25/26 (Jan to Mar 2026)	115	11 (10%)	19 (17%), plus 10 respite

Impact and Data Maturity

The program's primary documented outcome is its 60% long-term housing placement rate, with 46 of 77 documented discharges resulting in long-term housing. This outcome is significant given the population served, including clients with disabling conditions, extremely low incomes, medical needs, and family stabilization needs. Clients exited through multiple housing pathways, including market-rate rentals, affordable units, Permanent Supportive Housing, voucher-supported housing, county housing, skilled care, college, and homeownership. During the reporting period, one client achieved homeownership and one enrolled at the University of New Mexico.

The average length of stay, ranging from 223 to 276 days, reflects the level of stabilization required before housing placement is possible for many clients. Consuelo's Place operates as a non-congregate stabilization and housing-placement setting, not a short-term overnight shelter. This distinction is important because clients often need time to complete documentation, coordinate benefits, address health-related needs, and secure an appropriate housing pathway.

Internal Tracking

Consuelo's Place maintains multiple data systems that support program oversight, outcome tracking, and public funding accountability. All clients are enrolled at intake into Santa Fe's Coordinated Entry through HMIS. HUD Annual Performance Reports cover April 2024 through April 2026 and Unite Us has documented referrals and warm handoffs to community partners since September 2020. Individual client files include intake paperwork, needs assessments, service plans, income verification, and case management records.

The program also maintains a discharge tracking spreadsheet that records intake and discharge dates, length of stay, destination when available, and discharge type. Quarterly YFS contract reports submitted to the City include income verification, demographic data, performance measures, and financial reporting. The medical respite component is tracked separately. Documentation is maintained securely and available for City review, with income verification certified by the Executive Director under federal regulation at each quarterly submission.

Local Successes

Consuelo's Place demonstrates measurable performance across housing placement, client stabilization, system coordination, and cost. Housing placements occurred in every reported quarter, showing consistency across the reporting period. The program's results are supported by its non-congregate shelter structure, wraparound case management, and use of multiple housing pathways, which allow staff to respond to differences in client need, eligibility, family composition, disability status, and housing readiness.

The program also operates at a low daily cost for the level of service provided. At $13.02 per client per day, Consuelo's Place provides private-room shelter, 24/7 staffing, case management, HMIS integration, and medical respite at a cost below hospital, incarceration, and other crisis-system alternatives. More than five years of Unite Us referral documentation reflects sustained coordination with community partners.

Scalability and Sustainability

Replicability

The model used by Consuelo's Place can be adapted in other communities where high-need households require private shelter, consistent staffing, case management, and coordinated housing placement. Its core components include non-congregate rooms, 24/7 operations, integrated case management, HMIS participation, Coordinated Entry alignment, and multiple pathways to long-term housing.

- **Facility Adaptability:** the 60-room model can be replicated in converted motels, apartment buildings, modular units, or purpose-built facilities.
- **Case Management Framework:** mandatory participation, social-determinants focus, housing-readiness orientation, and trauma-informed practice are documented, certified through recognized New Mexico credentials.
- **HMIS and Coordinated Entry Integration:** the program shows that a non-congregate shelter can be fully integrated into HUD's Coordinated Entry framework, making it eligible for Continuum of Care funding and federal reporting

- **Medical Respite Integration:** this component is replicable through hospital and health-system partnerships, and communities with significant medically complex populations.

This model is especially relevant for communities serving survivors of domestic violence and human trafficking, veterans, people with disabilities, older adults, and families with children. These populations often require privacy, safety planning, accessibility, medical coordination, and case management that can be difficult to provide in a congregate shelter setting. Certified peer and community support staff help build trust and provide services that are responsive to local culture and community needs.

Resources and Constraints

The program operates on a total budget of approximately $1.04 million, with the majority supported through the City of Santa Fe Youth and Family Services contract. The full budget and cost structure are detailed under Total Program Cost.

Replication would require sufficient facility capacity, around-the-clock coverage, qualified staff, compatible data systems, and formal participation in the local homelessness response system. For Consuelo's Place, this includes a 60-room facility, HMIS-compatible records, Unite Us participation, and Coordinated Entry connection through the local Continuum of Care.

The program also faces several constraints:

- Concentrated reliance on a single municipal funding source creates vulnerability to city budget cycles, making revenue diversification a strategic priority
- An extended average length of stay creates waitlist pressure
- Facility capacity limits the ability to respond to demand surges
- The forthcoming transition to independent nonprofit status will require building dedicated fundraising, financial management, and administrative infrastructure

Scalability

Consuelo's Place has demonstrated potential for scaling at both the program and system levels. Expanding physical capacity through additional buildings, motel acquisition, or new construction would increase the number of individuals and families served. The program has identified development funding and a facility-development contractor as future priorities.

The medical respite component could be expanded through hospital partnerships. This would be especially relevant as New Mexico's healthcare system continues to look for lower-cost alternatives to repeated hospitalization for medically fragile individuals who need shelter-based recovery and care coordination.

At the system level, the program's documented outcomes, data infrastructure, and certified workforce position it for replication in other New Mexico communities. The New Mexico Office of Housing could support feasibility studies and startup costs for non-congregate shelter programs in Albuquerque, Farmington, and other communities with similar needs. The program's transition to independent nonprofit status may also support scaling by expanding access to federal Continuum of Care grants, private philanthropy, and diversified revenue.

Sustainability

Consuelo's Place has a stable operating foundation, supported by a $780,000 YFS contract and a multi-year funding history with the City of Santa Fe. The program is also embedded in the regional homelessness response

system through Santa Fe's Continuum of Care and HMIS, which supports coordination, reporting, accountability, and alignment with public funding requirements.

As a non-profit, Consuelo's Place is well-positioned to leverage philanthropic and government grants, tax-exempt donations, and property tax exemptions. The primary sustainability risk is the transition to independent 501(c)(3) status, effective July 1, 2026. As Consuelo's Place moves out of fiscal sponsorship, it will need to assume responsibility for financial management, fundraising, compliance, and administrative systems that are currently supported through its fiscal sponsor. Capacity-building support and technical assistance will be important to protect program continuity during this transition.

Workforce sustainability is also a related concern. The program has a stable certified case management team, but Santa Fe's high cost of living creates ongoing retention pressure. Maintaining competitive compensation will be important to preserving staff continuity and the level of case management required by the population served.

Equity and Culture

Cultural Humility

Consuelo's Place demonstrates cultural responsiveness through the way services are structured, staffed, and delivered. The program serves clients with significant histories of trauma, including survivors of domestic violence, sexual trauma, and human trafficking. Its trauma-informed and harm-reduction approach helps reduce barriers to service for clients who may not safely or consistently engage in more restrictive shelter settings.

The private-room model is a key part of this strength. For survivors, LGBTQIA+ clients, people with disabilities, and others with histories of victimization, privacy is not simply a facility feature. It supports safety, dignity, and the ability to participate in case management without the added risks that can occur in congregate settings.

Certified peer and community support staff also strengthen the program's ability to serve Santa Fe's diverse population. Their training and community-based practice support trust, cultural responsiveness, and more effective engagement with Hispanic, American Indian, LGBTQIA+, veteran, and other client populations. The program's service to single fathers, who represent 26% of clients, also reflects an understanding that family homelessness includes a range of household structures and caregiving roles.

A dedicated domestic violence specialist further strengthens the model by ensuring that survivors receive safety planning and specialized support rather than generalized case management alone. Together, these elements make the program better equipped to serve clients whose housing instability is connected to trauma, family disruption, disability, discrimination, or long-term distrust of formal systems.

Demographic and Geographic Adaptability

Consuelo's Place demonstrates adaptability in serving a population with wide variation in age, household composition, disability status, and housing need. The program serves clients from newborns to age 86, requiring service coordination that can respond to children, older adults, families, and medically fragile clients within the same shelter setting. This range is significant because the program must support school stability, pediatric needs, disability-related accommodations, medical coordination, fall-risk reduction, and senior housing referrals without relying on a one-size-fits-all shelter model.

The program also adapts to diverse household structures, including single mothers, single fathers, two-parent households, and extended-family configurations. This is especially important for a non-congregate shelter serving families and clients with disabilities, who may need privacy, space, accessibility, and individualized case planning to remain safely sheltered while working toward housing placement.

Santa Fe's housing market adds a significant geographic constraint. Limited affordable rental stock requires the program to use multiple housing pathways rather than a single placement strategy. Consuelo's Place draws on Permanent Supportive Housing, Linkages vouchers, County Housing Authority resources, private-market navigation, and affordable housing options outside Santa Fe when appropriate. Placements in Albuquerque, Española, and other communities demonstrate the program's ability to adjust housing plans to client needs and market realities.

Program Improvement and Funding

Program Improvements

Based on program data and identified development priorities, several improvements are recommended:

- **Nonprofit Transition Readiness:** Build the financial management, board governance, compliance, fundraising, and administrative systems needed for independent 501(c)(3) operations.
- **Outcome Measurement:** Add consistent pre- and post-service measures to document quality-of-life changes, income growth, and client stability beyond initial housing placement.
- **Medical Respite Reporting:** Develop a focused reporting process for medical respite outcomes, including hospital readmissions, length of stay, housing placement, and health-system cost avoidance.
- **Post-Exit Follow-Up:** Implement a 6- and 12-month follow-up process to document housing retention and identify clients who may need additional support before housing is lost.
- **Waitlist Documentation:** Formalize waitlist tracking to document unmet need and support future facility expansion planning.

Policy and Funding Considerations

Consuelo's Place is positioned to pursue several policy and funding pathways that align with its shelter, housing stabilization, and medical respite work.

- **HUD Continuum of Care Program:** Support for housing-focused services aligned with Coordinated Entry, HMIS participation, and documented housing outcomes.
- **HUD Emergency Solutions Grants:** Support for eligible shelter, case management, and housing stabilization activities through the state allocation administered by the New Mexico Mortgage Finance Authority.
- **New Mexico Office of Housing Funding:** State homelessness response funding aligned with non-congregate shelter, housing placement, medical respite, and stabilization services.
- **Medicaid Reimbursement Review:** Assessment of whether eligible case management services delivered by certified staff can be reimbursed through Centennial Care managed care contracts.
- **VA Housing Partnerships:** Expanded housing options for veteran clients through VA-supported housing resources and voucher partnerships.
- **Hospital Community-Benefit Partnerships:** Formal partnership opportunities with Christus St. Vincent Regional Medical Center or other health-system partners

Technical Assistance

The highest-priority technical assistance needs are tied to nonprofit transition, revenue development, facility expansion, and stronger outcome documentation.

- **501(c)(3) Transition Planning:** Board development, compliance systems, financial management infrastructure, and administrative readiness.
- **Federal Grant Development:** Support identifying and applying for HUD, Emergency Solutions, SAMHSA, and other federal opportunities aligned with the program's services and outcomes.
- **Medicaid Billing Review:** Analysis of whether case management services provided by certified staff are billable under Centennial Care.
- **Facility Expansion Strategy:** Guidance on development funding, capital planning, housing-development financing, Low-Income Housing Tax Credit opportunities, and philanthropic capital.
- **Data System Refinement:** Support integrating post-exit follow-up, income tracking, medical respite outcomes, and cost-effectiveness reporting into existing data systems.

Data Capacity Recommendations

Consuelo's Place already has a strong data foundation. The next step is to strengthen how existing data is used to show longer-term impact and cost effectiveness.

- **Housing Retention:** Add a 6- and 12-month post-exit follow-up process to document whether clients remain housed after placement.
- **Income Change:** Track client income at entry and exit to show whether the program is supporting economic stability alongside housing placement.
- **Medical Respite Outcomes:** Create a separate reporting process for medical respite clients, including hospital readmissions, length of stay, housing placement, and discharge outcomes.
- **Quality-of-Life Measures:** Add a standardized tool at intake and exit to document changes in client well-being, safety, and stability.
- **Cost-Effectiveness Analysis:** Produce an annual comparison of the program's per-client cost against emergency department, incarceration, and other crisis-system costs.

Funding Diversity

Current funding is concentrated in one municipal source. The City of Santa Fe Youth and Family Services contract provides $780,000, representing 71% of the total program budget. A practical diversification goal would be to reduce the City contract share below 60% by securing at least $200,000 in new federal, state, healthcare, philanthropic, or private revenue. This target is supported by the program's housing outcomes, public funding history, medical respite component, and anticipated transition to independent nonprofit status.

Total Program Cost

The program's annual budget and cost structure are summarized below:

Item	Amount
Total program budget (FY2025 to 2026)	$1,035,998
City of Santa Fe YFS funding	$780,000 (71%)
Other funding sources	$255,998 (29%)
Estimated FY2026 to 2027 budget	$1,100,000
Cost per client per day	$13.02

Annual cost per client	$5,000

At an operational cost of $13.02 per client per day, the program achieves exceptional cost-efficiency while delivering comprehensive, high-tier intervention. This baseline funding encompasses private accommodations, 24/7 staffing, comprehensive case management, full HMIS integration, and dedicated access to medical respite. Consequently, this model yields substantial cost avoidance when measured against the municipal expenses typically incurred by this demographic within the public system:

- **Congregate shelter:** National averages for standard emergency shelter beds range from $35 to $65 per night, despite offering significantly fewer individualized stabilization services.
- **Incarceration:** A single night of detention at the Albuquerque jail costs approximately $169, representing a thirteen-fold increase over the program's daily operational rate.
- **Emergency care:** Hospital emergency department visits frequently run between $2,000 and $3,000 per encounter, an expense repeatedly sustained by public infrastructure when medically fragile individuals remain unsheltered.

The program's fiscal justification is further reinforced by its longitudinal outcomes. By successfully transitioning 64% of discharging clients into long-term housing at an annual maintenance cost of approximately $5,000 per individual, the initiative secures permanent placement at an average cost of $7,800 per housed client. This proactive stabilization drastically reduces the compounding fiscal strain on emergency services, healthcare networks, and correctional systems that inevitably occurs when this population remains unhoused. For New Mexico's most vulnerable and complex residents, Consuelo's Place demonstrates that a non-congregate, case-managed shelter model serves as both a humane intervention and a strategically sound public investment.

Cuba Cares Community School Initiative

CUBA INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT COMMUNITY SCHOOLS PROGRAM

Program Overview

Program Snapshot

Program Name	Cuba Cares Community School Initiative
Operated By	Cuba Independent School District Community Schools Program
Service Area	Cuba and the eastern Navajo Nation, northern New Mexico

Staffing

Cuba Cares is led by Victoria Dominguez, Community Schools Director and District Social Worker, who serves as the primary program lead. Program operations are supported by Cuba ISD staff across all district departments, who collaborate to provide coordinated, holistic services, and the program also draws on community volunteers and partnership personnel.

Program Design and Operations

Intended Outcomes

Cuba Cares operates on a community school model grounded in the recognition that students cannot succeed academically when fundamental survival needs go unmet. The program's theory of change follows a clear logic: by meeting basic needs for food, clothing, hygiene, connectivity, and family support, it removes the barriers that keep students from attending and engaging in school.

The intended outcomes are improved student attendance and academic engagement, reduced housing and food insecurity among student households, strengthened family-school relationships, and a more resilient community safety net in a geographically isolated region.

Populations Served

Cuba Cares serves the 627 students enrolled in Cuba ISD, from PreK through 12th grade, along with their families, and extends to the broader Cuba community, including adults without school-age children. The community it serves carries an exceptionally high rate of housing instability.

McKinney-Vento Homelessness Identification

School Level	Students Identified	Share
Elementary School	46 of 247	18.6%
Middle School	49 of 143	34.3%
High School	66 of 238	27.7%
Total	161 of 627	25.7%

Demographic Breakdown of Enrolled Students

Group	Students	Share
American Indian	474	75.6%
Hispanic	117	18.7%
Caucasian	17	2.7%
Asian	12	1.9%
African American, Pacific Islander, Unclassified	7 combined	1.1%

The large majority of students are members of or connected to the Navajo Nation and other Indigenous communities. Cuba ISD serves students from the immediate Cuba community as well as those traveling from the eastern portion of the Navajo Nation, some enduring bus commutes of up to two hours each way, a reflection of the extremely rural isolation of this region. The absence of comparable services within a 60-mile radius makes Cuba Cares the primary, and in many cases the only, accessible community resource for these families.

Evidence and Data

Quantitative Indicators

Cuba Cares currently tracks a defined set of quantitative indicators across its services:

- Monthly service utilization counts from sign-in logs, capturing the number of individuals and families served
- Annual total service visits
- McKinney-Vento homelessness identification rates by school level
- Demographic enrollment data by race and ethnicity
- Food pantry distribution counts through the Roadrunner Food Bank partnership
- Internet access provision, measured as the number of student households receiving Starlink service
- Paid internship participation, including students enrolled and hours worked
- Community event attendance and Parent University session participation

The program acknowledges that its formal data collection is in early maturity, with sign-in logs as the primary quantitative tool, and that it is positioned to expand its data infrastructure with appropriate technical assistance.

Impact and Data Maturity

Service utilization has been high and consistent across the 2025 to 2026 school year:

Month	Service Visits
July 2025	91
August 2025	306
September 2025	330

October 2025	236
November 2025	260
December 2025	216
January 2026	232
February 2026	201
March 2026	205
April 2026	247
10-month total	2,324

Averaging 232 visits per month during the active school year, these figures demonstrate sustained, deep community reliance on Cuba Cares. The August and September peaks align with the back-to-school period, when families face heightened demand for clothing, supplies, and food, and the absence of any significant drop-off across the winter months, when travel is most difficult, indicates that families prioritize access to Cuba Cares even under challenging conditions.

Cuba Cares is at an early-to-intermediate stage of data maturity. It reliably collects service utilization counts through sign-in logs and maintains McKinney-Vento identification data through the district's student information system, and its qualitative evidence, including community testimonials, family feedback, and staff observations, is robust. The program does not yet systematically collect individual-level outcome data such as housing stability changes or attendance before and after engagement and strengthening the connection between program utilization and educational and housing outcomes is its primary data development opportunity.

Internal Tracking

Cuba Cares maintains a sign-in system that records visits by individuals and families, allowing the program to track utilization frequency, overall reach, and patterns of community need over time, and this data is reviewed to inform resource allocation and programming decisions. The district also maintains McKinney-Vento identification data through its student information system, providing a baseline measure of housing instability among the enrolled student population.

Formal outcome tracking beyond utilization counts is not yet systematically implemented, and the program relies heavily on qualitative feedback gathered informally through staff interactions and community relationships. Development of a more structured intake and outcome tracking system has been identified as a priority technical assistance need. An external evaluator to assist in the development of a robust outcomes evaluation is recommended.

Local Successes

Cuba Cares demonstrates positive trends and meaningful local impact through both quantitative utilization data and qualitative community evidence.

Its 2,324 service visits over ten months represent consistent, high-frequency engagement, and the steady month-to-month utilization, including through winter months when road conditions can make travel difficult, demonstrates that families treat Cuba Cares as a trusted, essential resource. With 161 students, or 25.7% of enrollment, identified as experiencing homelessness, the program operates in one of the most acutely housing-

insecure school communities in New Mexico, and as the only comparable resource within 60 miles, its impact on this population is undiluted by alternative providers.

Community feedback consistently reflects that families feel welcomed, respected, and supported rather than judged when accessing Cuba Cares. In a rural, predominantly Indigenous community where seeking assistance can carry cultural and social sensitivity, this trust is a critical outcome in itself and a precondition for effective service delivery. Parents report that reliable access to food, clothing, hygiene items, and application assistance has meaningfully reduced household stress and improved their capacity to focus on their children's well-being. The provision of free Starlink internet to every registered student household addresses one of the most significant structural barriers to educational equity, medical and behavioral health care in rural New Mexico, and paid internships at $15 per hour extend the program's impact from crisis response toward long-term economic mobility.

Scalability and Sustainability

Replicability

Cuba Cares is replicable across rural and tribal school districts in New Mexico and nationally, with appropriate adaptation. Its core replication elements are:

- **School-based hub model:** locating the resource center within or adjacent to the school district leverages existing infrastructure, trust, and relationships, and in rural New Mexico schools are often the most trusted and consistently accessible institutions in the community
- **Donation-based resource distribution:** collecting, cleaning, and freely distributing donated goods requires minimal capital investment and can begin with modest startup resources
- **Community school framework:** alignment with the national Community Schools model provides a replication pathway and access to federal funding streams and technical assistance
- **Roadrunner Food Bank partnership:** this statewide partnership is available to other districts, providing a replicable template for food access integration
- **Connectivity model:** the district-funded Starlink internet program is replicable by other rural districts facing the digital divide.

Rural isolation, small staff capacity, and limited local philanthropy are genuine constraints for communities similar to Cuba, so replication support should include startup funding, technical assistance on developing memoranda of understanding, and connection to statewide food banks and benefit navigation partnerships.

Resources and Constraints

Cuba Cares operates at an annual cost of approximately $220,000, covering staff salaries and benefits, program operations, facility maintenance, and supplies, supplemented by donated goods from local businesses, organizations, and community members whose value is not formally quantified. Beyond funding, the program requires a dedicated Community Schools Director serving as program manager, cross-departmental staff participation, community volunteers, a dedicated resource-center facility, transportation for student internships, and Starlink equipment and service for enrolled households.

The model carries several structural constraints:

- Geographic isolation limits access to large-scale in-kind donations and complicates supply-chain management

- Limited local philanthropy in a rural, low-income community leaves the program dependent on external funding and regional donor networks
- A small staff team carries significant responsibility, making succession planning and cross-training critical to resilience
- Reliance on donated goods creates inventory variability that can affect service consistency

Scalability

Cuba Cares has expanded since its 2020 founding from basic goods distribution to a comprehensive model that now includes food pantry access, wellness services, digital equity, paid internships, Parent University, and community events, demonstrating organizational capacity to scale programmatically as funding and partnerships grow. With additional transportation and mobile outreach capacity, it could extend services to even more isolated households, and the model is directly applicable to other rural and tribal districts across northern New Mexico, including communities in Rio Arriba, Taos, Mora, and San Miguel counties where comparable resource gaps exist. Scaling is constrained by limited staff capacity, extremely rural geography, and the need for sustained, flexible funding.

Sustainability

Cuba Cares has demonstrated meaningful sustainability since its 2020 founding. As a program of Cuba ISD, it benefits from the district's institutional stability, School Board governance, and long-term community presence, a significant advantage over nonprofit-operated programs more vulnerable to funding cycles. Its deep community roots and reputation as a culturally responsive, dignity-centered resource have generated strong community buy-in, and formal agreements with Roadrunner Food Bank and Presbyterian Medical Services create stability in food access and health services.

Sustainability risks include dependence on a single primary program manager, reliance on donated goods with variable supply, and the absence of diversified funding beyond the district budget. The $220,000 annual commitment represents a significant burden for a small rural district, making external funding support critical to long-term sustainability.

Equity and Culture

Cultural Humility

Cuba Cares demonstrates cultural humility in ways that are both structural and relational, reflecting a deep understanding of the cultural, historical, and community context of northern New Mexico. With 75.6% of enrolled students identifying as American Indian, many connected to the Navajo Nation, the program operates in a community where historical trauma associated with government institutions is real and significant, and its school-based model, embedded within a trusted local institution rather than administered by an outside agency, reflects awareness of that context.

Staff and volunteers explicitly prioritize a welcoming, respectful, nonjudgmental environment where individuals feel valued rather than processed, a relational approach foundational to serving Indigenous and rural Hispanic communities where seeking assistance can carry cultural sensitivity. All services are provided at no cost with no eligibility gatekeeping, reflecting an understanding that bureaucratic barriers disproportionately affect communities with historical distrust of institutional systems. The program was created by Cuba ISD in direct response to community-identified needs rather than imposed from outside, with monthly community school meetings and Parent University sessions ensuring ongoing community voice, and its inclusion of wellness services such as therapy dogs and acupuncture reflects attention to wellness in a culturally accessible format. Areas for

continued growth include formal engagement of tribal leadership in governance, documentation of Spanish and Navajo language access, and explicit incorporation of Indigenous knowledge frameworks.

Demographic and Geographic Adaptability

Cuba Cares is specifically designed for, and continuously adapted to, the unique demographic and geographic context of northern New Mexico. It operates in one of the most geographically isolated districts in the state, serving families in areas without running water, electricity, or reliable cell service, and adapts accordingly: the centralized facility consolidates access to avoid requiring multiple trips across a wide area, while Starlink service is provided directly to student homes to bridge the digital divide. With some students commuting up to two hours each way, services are structured around the district schedule so families who cannot make separate trips can still access resources.

The program serves students and families from the eastern Navajo Nation, adapting outreach to reach community members whose primary connection to Cuba is through the school, a cross-jurisdictional reach uncommon for a district-based program. Because there are no comparable alternatives within 60 miles, Cuba Cares has adapted to serve as a comprehensive resource hub spanning food, water, clothing, hygiene, application assistance, housing support, wellness, connectivity, and career readiness, and its donation-based model allows supply to flex with demand as community needs shift.

Program Improvement and Funding

Program Improvements

Based on the program's current design and identified gaps, several improvements are recommended:

- **Outcome tracking development:** move from utilization-only data toward an outcome-focused framework capturing changes in housing stability, school attendance, food security, and family stress over time
- **Formal intake tool:** develop a brief, standardized intake instrument to collect household needs, demographics, and service history while maintaining a low-barrier, welcoming entry experience
- **Language access formalization:** document and strengthen Spanish and Navajo language capacity, including staff training and translated materials
- **Partnership formalization:** convert existing good-faith partnerships into memoranda of understanding to increase service reliability and accountability
- **Succession planning:** develop cross-training protocols and a continuity plan to reduce dependence on a single program lead
- **Volunteer management:** implement a structured volunteer coordination process to improve consistency and recognition
- **Tribal partnership formalization:** pursue formal coordination with Navajo Nation chapter leadership to strengthen culturally responsive delivery and extend outreach to the eastern Navajo Nation

Policy and Funding Considerations

Cuba Cares operates at the intersection of education, housing, and human services, positioning it to access a range of policy and funding opportunities:

- McKinney-Vento Act subgrant funding through the New Mexico Public Education Department, given 161 eligible students
- Federal Full-Service Community Schools Program grants, with which the model aligns directly

- Title I and Every Student Succeeds Act flexibility to direct funds toward student support services that address barriers to achievement
- New Mexico Office of Housing homelessness prevention funding, given the program's direct service to McKinney-Vento families
- USDA Rural Development community facilities and food access programs, for which Cuba's rural designation qualifies it
- Indian Health Service and tribal funding streams to support wellness services for Navajo Nation community members

Technical Assistance

The program has identified several technical assistance priorities:

- **Data systems development:** a simple, low-burden system capturing utilization by household, demographics, needs presented, and follow-up outcomes
- **Outcome measurement framework:** an evaluation framework connecting program activities to educational and housing outcomes, including linkage to district data where appropriate
- **Grant writing and funding diversification:** help identifying and applying for federal, state, and foundation funding to reduce dependence on district appropriations
- **Partnership development:** templates and guidance for formalizing partnerships with tribal entities, health providers, and regional organizations
- **Replication toolkit:** a guide other rural districts could use to adapt the model

Data Capacity Recommendations

To strengthen its evidence base and support its development as a replicable promising practice, the following investments are recommended:

- Upgrade the sign-in sheet to a brief structured intake capturing household size, primary needs, McKinney-Vento status, and first-time versus return status
- With appropriate privacy protections, link utilization records to the district student information system to analyze correlations with attendance, grades, and discipline
- Develop a structured community feedback process, such as a brief exit survey or periodic focus groups, to systematically capture qualitative impact
- Incorporate McKinney-Vento identification trends over time into annual reporting to document whether the program reaches its highest-need population
- Develop a standardized annual report template compiling utilization, demographic reach, service highlights, and qualitative outcomes

Funding Diversity

Current funding rests primarily on the Cuba ISD district budget, which covers staff salaries and benefits, program operations, facility maintenance, and Starlink service, supplemented by in-kind donations and the Roadrunner Food Bank partnership, which provides monthly food pantry access at reduced or no cost.

Opportunities to diversify include:

- U.S. Department of Education Community Schools Program grants
- Title I and McKinney-Vento subgrant funding through the New Mexico Public Education Department
- New Mexico Office of Housing homelessness prevention funding

- USDA Rural Development community facilities and food access programs
- Indian Health Service and tribal funding streams
- AmeriCorps VISTA placements to expand capacity and reduce direct staffing costs
- Private foundation grants focused on rural education, food security, and community development

Diversifying beyond district general fund appropriations is a priority sustainability strategy, since the $220,000 annual commitment represents a significant fiscal burden for a small rural district with a limited tax base.

Total Program Cost

Cuba Cares operates at an annual cost of approximately $220,000, covering staff salaries and benefits, program operations and supplies, facility maintenance, and Starlink internet service for enrolled student households. In-kind contributions of donated goods, volunteer time, and partner services are not formally monetized and are not included in this figure, though their value to the program is significant.

Serving 627 enrolled students plus their families and broader community members, with 2,324 documented service visits in ten months, the program's per-visit cost is approximately $95 when measured against documented visits alone, a figure that does not account for the full scope of household-level impact, educational benefit, or community stabilization it generates. That cost reflects a comprehensive, whole-family model in an extreme-need, geographically isolated context; comparable community school programs in urban and suburban settings typically cost considerably more per student served, making Cuba Cares' efficiency in a rural, high-need environment a notable strength and a sound public investment in one of New Mexico's most isolated communities.

Future Focused Education Pre-Apprenticeship

Behavioral Health & Human Services Pre-Apprenticeship

Community Care Collective

Program Overview

Program Snapshot

Program Name	Behavioral Health & Human Services (BHHS) Pre-Apprenticeship
Operated By	Community Care Collective and Future Focused Education
Service Area	Albuquerque metropolitan area, New Mexico

Staffing

The program is staffed by two direct program staff members at Future Focused Education, a program director and lead coach plus at least one additional coach. Each pre-apprentice is also assigned an on-site mentor at their placement host site, yielding a combined network of approximately 13 mentors and staff across the 2025 to 2026 cohort, comprising 11 placement mentors plus 2 program staff. Future Focused Education indicated availability of 1 to 5 hours for evaluation engagement, with two staff available for coordination.

Program Design and Operations

Intended Outcomes

The BHHS Pre-Apprenticeship operates on a theory of change grounded in work-based learning: supervised, paid placement at a community behavioral health host site provides the core developmental environment, while structured coaching, mentorship, and cohort learning reinforce and contextualize applied experience.

The program is structured across two sequential semesters, approximately 24 weeks total. Each semester, participants select three behavioral health competencies, drawn from a framework developed with the Community Care Collective Advisory Group, and construct a Learning Plan outlining concrete activities and self-defined success criteria for each. This competency-based design ensures that youth are not passive observers but intentional learners pursuing specific professional skills within real workplace contexts.

Midpoint site visits bring together the pre-apprentice, their placement mentor, and their program coach in a structured three-way review that identifies early strengths and growth areas. This midpoint feedback loop allows for real-time course correction and strengthens the working relationship between youth and mentors. At the program's end, participants complete a Presentation of Learning, a culminating, evidence-based presentation of their competency development, which develops communication skills, professional confidence, and the ability to synthesize and articulate growth.

Approximately half of placements integrate participants as Youth Peer Support Specialists, providing structured support toward completing New Mexico's state Youth Peer Support Specialist training and certification process and directly translating program participation into a recognized workforce credential.

Paid stipends, approximately $14 per hour for 10 hours per week for high school participants and approximately $16 per hour for 20 hours per week for post-secondary participants, reduce financial barriers that

disproportionately affect low-income youth and those experiencing housing instability, enabling sustained engagement across both semesters.

Populations Served

The BHHS Pre-Apprenticeship serves youth in the Albuquerque metropolitan area who are interested in behavioral health and human services careers. The 2025 to 2026 cohort included 11 participants, 10 of whom completed the full program year. Participants are predominantly high school age, with some post-secondary participants.

New Mexico's demographic context is central to the program's design and impact. The state has the second-highest proportion of Native American residents in the United States, a majority Hispanic/Latinx population in many communities, and persistent poverty rates among the highest in the nation. Many of the youth served come from communities that are underrepresented in the behavioral health workforce and that have historically had limited access to formal career pathways. The program's host sites, which include Healthcare for the Homeless, substance use treatment settings, school-based programs, peer recovery organizations, and health council prevention programs, serve individuals experiencing homelessness, addiction, and other behavioral health challenges. Program participants who reflect these communities bring culturally responsive presence to sites that directly serve vulnerable populations.

While the program is not exclusively designed for youth experiencing homelessness, the focus on Youth Peer Support Specialist certification and placement within homeless-serving organizations creates a meaningful connection between participant development and the needs of housing-insecure community members.

Evidence and Data

Quantitative Indicators

Program completion was strong in the first cohort: 10 of 11 enrolled pre-apprentices completed the full 8-month program year, a 91% completion rate. The one non-completer chose to transition to a less intensive group internship format, reflecting program flexibility rather than dropout.

Post-Survey: Career Readiness and Social Capital (n=9)

Indicator	Agree or Strongly Agree
Built skills to support future education and career	100%
Can describe different career paths in behavioral health	100%
Now has contact information for at least 2 adults to reach out to	100%
Comfortable advocating for self when needing help	89%
More confident they can succeed in the future	89%
Clarity about whether behavioral health is the right career path	67%

Post-Survey: Program Satisfaction (n=9)

Measure	Rating

Relationship with mentor(s)	100% Very Satisfied
Support from Pathways Coach	100% Very Satisfied
Overall program experience	89% Very Satisfied
Tasks, roles, and responsibilities at placement site	44% Very Satisfied; remainder Satisfied

Midpoint competency ratings from the Health Leadership High School site show self-assessed ratings of 3 to 5 out of 5 across seven competency domains, with mentor scores closely aligned, indicating inter-rater consistency and meaningful engagement.

Statewide Pathway Enrollment Context (FY26)

Pathway Component	Participants	Completers
Group Internships (three cohorts, fall and spring)	29	26
Pre-Apprenticeship	11	10
Youth Behavioral Health Council	12	In progress
Social Work Practicum Interns	4	4 (1 BSW, 3 MSW)

Impact and Data Maturity

The pre- and post-survey data represents a first-year cohort with a small sample of nine matched respondents, and results should be interpreted as promising early indicators rather than statistically validated findings. Response rates were high relative to cohort size, but the sample is insufficient to draw generalizable conclusions.

The largest pre-to-post gains appear in mental health literacy and peer support skills, areas that are central to the program's workforce development purpose and to effective engagement with individuals experiencing homelessness. The 1.11-point gain in confidence recognizing mental health challenges is the most notable quantitative shift and aligns with the curriculum's emphasis on behavioral health observation and assessment competencies.

Career readiness indicators show near-ceiling post-survey performance, which may reflect both genuine growth and possible ceiling effects given that participants self-selected into a career-oriented program. The 67% rate of career direction clarity is notably more modest and reflects honest variation, as some participants used the program to explore and decide behavioral health is not their path, which is also a valid and valuable outcome.

Satisfaction with mentor relationships and coaching, both at 100% Very Satisfied, is strong and consistent across participants. Site task satisfaction was somewhat lower at 44% Very Satisfied, suggesting variance in the richness of day-to-day placement activities across different host sites, an area for continued quality improvement and site preparation.

The program is in its first year of systematic data collection. Longitudinal data, tracking post-program enrollment in behavioral health education, employment in the field, and sustained connection to the professional network, will be critical to substantiating long-term impact claims.

Internal Tracking

Future Focused Education maintains a multi-source data infrastructure for the BHHS Pre-Apprenticeship that includes:

- Participant pre- and post-surveys covering mental health literacy, career readiness, and program satisfaction
- Semester-based Learning Plans capturing individualized competency goals and self-evaluation criteria
- Midpoint Site Visit and Check-In Reports capturing parallel self-assessments and mentor evaluations across seven competency domains
- Mentor Final Reflection data
- Qualitative artifacts from final Presentations of Learning
- Enrollment and completion tracking by program component and semester

All data is cleaned and anonymized with participant identifiers that allow for tracking across data sheets, as described in the program's Data Source Guide. Participants sign informed consent agreements permitting use of de-identified data for evaluation and storytelling, and Future Focused Education has expressed willingness to share de-identified data with external evaluation teams under a formal memorandum of understanding. Current tracking does not yet include systematic follow-up data on post-program outcomes such as enrollment, employment, and continued engagement, which the program notes as a gap and a priority for future investment.

Local Successes

First-year data reveals several locally significant positive trends:

- **Workforce pipeline formation:** multiple participants reported direct career direction changes attributable to the program, including one who enrolled in a human services degree program during the pre-apprenticeship, another who became open to addiction recovery as a career path for the first time, and a third who confirmed a commitment to the social work field. In a state with some of the highest behavioral health provider vacancy rates in the nation, youth workforce pipeline development carries outsized local significance
- **Integration into homeless-serving systems:** host sites including Healthcare for the Homeless, Turquoise Lodge Hospital, and peer recovery organizations provided youth with direct exposure to and experience supporting individuals experiencing homelessness, building addiction literacy, harm reduction understanding, and peer support skills
- **Youth Peer Support Specialist pathway:** approximately half of placements are structured around certification, creating a direct credentialing pathway tied to New Mexico's behavioral health workforce infrastructure
- **Participant-reported community connection:** multiple participants described their placement sites as connected to their own communities, enabling culturally grounded service, and one reflected on learning about intergenerational and historical trauma as the most important thing they gained
- **Early host-site employment interest:** the Promising Practices submission notes that some participants were offered employment by their host sites upon or near program completion, suggesting early evidence of the program's value as a talent development pipeline

Scalability and Sustainability

Replicability

The BHHS Pre-Apprenticeship model is designed for structured replication. Its core components, competency-based learning plans, paired coaching and mentorship, midpoint tripartite reviews, and a culminating Presentation of Learning, are documented in program materials and operationalized through standardized forms and protocols. The model does not depend on any single host site or individual staff member, making it structurally transferable.

The most significant replication requirements are a network of willing behavioral health host sites, trained program coaches capable of maintaining weekly individualized relationships with participants, and a stipend funding mechanism. The program's success in Albuquerque with multiple diverse host site types, including hospital settings, school-based programs, peer recovery organizations, prevention programs, and homeless-serving organizations, suggests adaptability across site typologies.

Replication in New Mexico's rural and frontier communities would require additional consideration of transportation infrastructure, host site density, and potentially remote or hybrid coaching models. The existing online group internship component demonstrates that Future Focused Education has already piloted statewide digital programming, providing a foundation for hybrid pre-apprenticeship models in geographically dispersed regions.

Resources and Constraints

At minimum, the program requires two dedicated program staff, a program director and at least one coach. The coaching relationship, built on weekly individualized one-on-one meetings, is labor-intensive and central to the model's relational foundation, so staff-to-participant ratios should be carefully maintained for quality fidelity. Host sites provide physical placement infrastructure, mentors, and on-site supervision at no direct cost to the program, a significant in-kind resource contribution, though maintaining and expanding the host site network requires ongoing relationship management.

Program scale is constrained by coaching capacity, available host sites in a given region, and stipend funding availability. Rural and frontier settings in New Mexico face additional constraints around transportation, host site availability, and supervisor capacity.

Scalability

The program demonstrates early readiness for cautious, quality-preserving scale. The FY26 cohort of 11 pre-apprentices represents a manageable first-year size for quality assurance, and scaling within the Albuquerque metro area is supported by the diversity of existing host site types and the presence of anchor institutions such as UNM Health, Presbyterian, and community health centers that could absorb additional placements.

Statewide scaling would require regional program coordinators or partner organizations capable of managing coaching relationships and host site networks in Las Cruces, Santa Fe, Taos, Gallup, and other population centers. Indigenous community contexts, particularly in the 19 pueblos and the Navajo Nation, would require co-design with tribal entities and adaptation of program materials to reflect Indigenous models of healing, community responsibility, and workforce. A tiered approach, deepening quality and data systems at the current Albuquerque site before expanding geographically, is advisable given the program's first-year status and the importance of maintaining the relational intensity that drives outcomes.

Sustainability

Current sustainability strengths include integration within a larger Pathways portfolio, spanning group internships, Youth Peer Support Specialist certification, social work practicum, and a Youth Advisory Council, that creates internal program infrastructure efficiencies; a promising practices designation application that signals external validation and positions the program for continued public investment; and growing host site relationships that may generate employer-funded workforce development contributions over time.

Key sustainability risks include dependency on grant-based stipend funding, with final stipend totals still being determined, and the labor-intensive coaching model, which is vulnerable to staff turnover. Investing in detailed program documentation, coach training protocols, and data systems will improve institutional resilience. Alignment with New Mexico Workforce Development Board priorities, Behavioral Health Services Division workforce initiatives, and potential Medicaid workforce development billing pathways for certification activities represents longer-term sustainability opportunities worth exploring.

Equity and Culture

Cultural Humility

Cultural humility is woven into the program's competency framework as a named, assessed domain rather than an ancillary consideration. Participants explicitly select Cultural Humility as one of their semester competencies or encounter it through the program's broader learning objectives, which include recognizing personal biases, engaging respectfully across diverse cultural backgrounds, and supporting inclusive and culturally responsive environments.

Midpoint evaluation data illustrates cultural humility in practice: one participant described helping design a Black History Month display at their school placement site as a concrete example of cultural humility development, moving cultural competence from abstraction into action, and the same participant's mentor affirmed strong self-awareness about the needs of others, demonstrating alignment between self-assessment and external observation.

The program's emphasis on Youth Peer Support Specialist development is itself a form of structural cultural humility: peer support models are grounded in the belief that lived experience carries professional legitimacy and that community members are best positioned to support others who share their backgrounds. For youth from Indigenous, Hispanic, or housing-insecure communities in New Mexico, this framing honors existing knowledge and community belonging as assets rather than deficits.

Participant reflections demonstrate internalization of culturally grounded concepts: one participant identified learning about intergenerational and historical trauma, including ancestral trauma relevant to Indigenous experience, as the most important thing they gained, and described plans to use this knowledge to advocate for better mental healthcare in their community. This suggests that program content is engaging New Mexico-specific cultural realities meaningfully rather than applying generic frameworks.

Demographic and Geographic Adaptability

New Mexico presents a distinctive geography of need: it is one of the nation's most rural states by land area, with significant Indigenous, Hispanic, and border communities experiencing compounding disadvantages in behavioral health access. The BHHS Pre-Apprenticeship demonstrates several adaptations to this context.

The program's host site diversity reflects New Mexico's heterogeneous service landscape, from hospital-based addiction treatment at Turquoise Lodge to school-based mental health at Health Leadership High School to homeless services at Healthcare for the Homeless to peer recovery organizations. This diversity allows pre-apprentices to be matched to settings that align with their communities and interests rather than applying a one-size-fits-all placement model.

The Community Care Collective's parallel online group internship, operating statewide, demonstrates capacity for hybrid and fully remote programming, a critical adaptation in a state where high desert terrain, long distances between communities, and limited public transportation create substantial access barriers. This digital infrastructure positions the program to eventually extend pre-apprenticeship coaching and cohort components to rural participants with local host site placements.

The paid stipend model is a direct adaptation to New Mexico's high youth poverty rates and the economic precarity of many participants' households. Unpaid internships are effectively inaccessible to youth who must contribute to household income or cover transportation costs, and the hourly stipend model ensures that career development does not require financial sacrifice. Participant reflections about placement sites being located in or near their own communities suggest that program staff attend to geographic and cultural proximity when making placements, an important equity-enhancing practice in a city where neighborhood resources and professional networks are not uniformly distributed.

Program Improvement and Funding

Program Improvements

Participant feedback from post-surveys identifies several areas for ongoing improvement:

- **Peer learning across sites:** one participant suggested more structured time for pre-apprentices to share what they are doing at their respective placement sites, noting that hearing about diverse site experiences enhances understanding of behavioral health as a field, which staff could build into cohort meetings
- **Program duration:** one participant suggested extending the placement period beyond the current school semester, noting that depth of engagement takes time to develop, which aligns with workforce development literature on longer placements building more durable skills and relationships
- **Host site quality variation:** lower post-survey satisfaction with site tasks (44% Very Satisfied versus 100% for coaching and mentoring) points to variability in how richly placements are structured, so strengthening host site orientation and mentor training may improve consistency
- **Documentation workload:** one pre-apprentice identified documentation and concise notetaking as a challenge, suggesting that writing-intensive requirements may benefit from more explicit skill development support early in the year
- **Longitudinal follow-up:** program staff have identified tracking participants' post-program education enrollment, employment, and continued engagement as a critical next development priority for demonstrating sustained impact

Policy and Funding Considerations

New Mexico faces a documented behavioral health workforce crisis, with vacancy rates for licensed clinical social workers, counselors, and peer support specialists among the highest in the nation. The BHHS Pre-Apprenticeship addresses an upstream workforce development gap that neither traditional education systems nor employer-based training has adequately filled for youth. Key policy considerations for the Office of Housing and state funders include:

- Alignment with Youth Peer Support Specialist workforce strategy: the Human Services Department's expansion of Medicaid-billable peer support services creates a direct policy hook for pre-apprenticeship programming that produces certified workers, and explicit alignment with state credentialing policy could position this model for Medicaid workforce development funding
- **Workforce pipeline for homeless-serving organizations:** host sites including Healthcare for the Homeless benefit from pre-apprentice capacity at no direct cost, and a formal policy framework incentivizing employer investment through stipend cost-sharing or workforce development tax credits could strengthen sustainability
- **Housing-workforce integration:** youth experiencing or at risk of homelessness who participate gain professional credentials, social capital, and career direction, all of which support long-term housing

stability, so explicit inclusion of this model in the state's homelessness response framework would reflect the evidence that workforce attachment is a housing stabilization intervention

Technical Assistance

The program has identified several technical assistance priorities:

- **Longitudinal data collection:** support designing a follow-up system to track participants 6, 12, and 24 months post-program across postsecondary enrollment, employment in behavioral health fields, and housing stability
- **Host site quality assurance:** assistance developing a host site readiness framework, mentor training curriculum, and site quality standards to reduce variability in placement experience
- **Rural and tribal adaptation:** consultation on culturally appropriate program adaptation for Indigenous communities and logistical models for rural delivery
- **Impact evaluation design:** support designing a more rigorous pre-post evaluation, including validated instruments and a comparison group, to strengthen evidence claims over time
- **Stipend funding diversification:** guidance on workforce development funding streams such as the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act, Perkins, the Behavioral Health Services Division, and employer co-investment that could provide more stable, multi-year stipend support

Data Capacity Recommendations

To strengthen its evidence base, the following data capacity investments are recommended:

- Implement a participant tracking database that follows individuals from pre-program enrollment through post-program outcomes, linked by the anonymized identifiers already in use
- Add two to three validated instruments, such as the Career Decision Self-Efficacy Scale and standardized mental health literacy measures, to supplement program-developed survey items and enable comparison with national benchmarks
- Develop a host site feedback survey administered at end-of-semester to systematically capture mentor and site perspectives on pre-apprentice contributions to service delivery capacity
- Build quarterly data review into program operations so staff can use data for continuous improvement rather than only end-of-year reporting
- Document and archive participant Presentations of Learning as qualitative evidence artifacts with consent, enabling richer story-based evidence for funders and policymakers

Funding Diversity

Future Focused Education's current funding mix for the BHHS Pre-Apprenticeship has not been fully disclosed in available program materials. The organization operates as part of a broader Pathways portfolio, spanning group internships, practicum placements, a Youth Advisory Council, and Mental Health First Aid training, which may share administrative infrastructure costs. Likely funding streams include:

- State or county behavioral health workforce development grants
- Federal workforce development allocations, with potential Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act or Perkins alignment
- Philanthropic or foundation support
- Possible in-kind contributions from host organizations

The program's participation in the Promising Practices Review reflects an active effort to position it for additional public investment and potential replication funding. Diversifying toward employer co-investment and multi-year state contracts would strengthen long-term stability.

Total Program Cost

Total program cost for FY26 has not been fully disclosed in available materials. The following estimates are derived from available enrollment and stipend data.

Stipend Estimate	Amount
High school participant ($14/hr, 10 hrs/wk, 24 wks)	$3,360
Post-secondary participant ($16/hr, 20 hrs/wk, 24 wks)	$7,680
Estimated total stipends for 11 participants	$37,000 to $55,000
Cost per completer (stipend only, derived)	$3,700 to $5,500

Cost per completer reflects stipends only and does not include program staff salaries, coaching overhead, training, or administrative expenses, which would increase the cost per participant.

The program notes that final stipend totals for FY26 are still being calculated, and full program cost data should be requested directly from Future Focused Education for an accurate cost-effectiveness analysis. For context, comparable work-based learning and pre-apprenticeship programs in other states typically report fully loaded costs of $7,000 to $15,000 per participant per year, suggesting this program may be delivering value at the lower end of the cost range, though this requires verification.

Mano y Mano Day Labor Program

Mesilla Valley Community of Hope

Program Overview

Program Snapshot

Program Name	Mano y Mano Day Labor Program
Operated By	Mesilla Valley Community of Hope (MVCH) / Abode, Inc., Las Cruces, New Mexico
Program Status	City of Las Cruces-funded program under service agreement with Community of Hope. Annual renewal, Year 2 of 5 (July 1, 2025, to June 30, 2026). Total annual contract not to exceed $530,000.

Staffing

The program is led by Nicole Martinez, Executive Director of Mesilla Valley Community of Hope and Abode, Inc. Operational staffing under the City of Las Cruces service agreement consists of four driver/supervisors who serve as crew leaders.

- **Crew leaders:** 3 are funded under the City contract at a combined salary of $135,000, and a fourth driver/supervisor supports the expanded Hotspot truck operations
- **Responsibilities:** driver/supervisors handle daily lottery administration, worksite supervision, safety oversight, referral coordination, and participant management
- **Driver Safety training:** completed by all drivers through the City of Las Cruces

Supporting staff and campus partners extend the program's reach:

- Community of Hope administrative staff, including the Executive Director, accountant, and Deputy Director, provide financial oversight, compliance, and grievance and appeals processing
- City Neighborhood Services staff monitor the Mano y Mano city email inbox for referral requests from businesses, law enforcement, and code enforcement
- El Caldito soup kitchen staff provide daily lunch to participants at the adjacent facility
- Campus partner staff from Community of Hope programs, including SOAR, housing, case management, behavioral health, childcare, and medical and dental services, receive walk-in referrals from Mano y Mano supervisors

Program Design and Operations

Intended Outcomes

Mano y Mano operates on a theory of change grounded in the recognition that people experiencing homelessness are capable, motivated workers who lack access to economic opportunity, not the will to work. The program provides immediate paid day labor, pairs it with real-time referrals to wraparound services, and uses its Hotspot truck operations to reach people directly at encampment sites.

The program's intended outcomes are increased immediate income for people experiencing homelessness, improved connection to shelter, housing, and wraparound services, reduced encampment-related calls for service, improved community relationships, and documented pathways from Mano y Mano participation to housing and employment stability.

Populations Served

Mano y Mano serves individuals experiencing homelessness and near-homelessness in Las Cruces, New Mexico. Participants must be 18 years of age or older, physically able to perform day labor, sober at the time of participation, and willing to work. In fiscal year 2025 to 2026, the program served 1,339 unique individuals.

Race

Group	Individuals	Share
White/Caucasian	1,258	94.0%
Black/African American	53	4.0%
American Indian/Alaskan Native	8	0.6%
Other multi-racial	20	1.4%

Gender

Gender	Individuals	Share
Male	1,113	83.1%
Female	226	16.9%

Age Distribution

Age Range	Individuals	Share
Under 20	12	1.2%
20 to 29	163	17%
30 to 39	276	29%
40 to 49	217	22%
50 to 59	182	19%
60 to 69	94	10%
70 to 79	17	1.8%

The predominantly White/Caucasian racial profile of participants reflects the demographic composition of homelessness in the Las Cruces and Dona Ana County region of southern New Mexico, where the unhoused population skews differently from northern New Mexico's more heavily Indigenous demographic. Ethnicity data were not available in the submitted sample and therefore could not be assessed. The strong representation of

working-age adults, ages 20 to 59 comprising 87% of participants, is consistent with a program serving individuals capable of and motivated to perform day labor. The program also serves the broader community through Hotspot truck encampment cleaning, which benefits neighborhoods and local businesses regardless of participant enrollment.

Evidence and Data

Quantitative Indicators

Mano y Mano's City of Las Cruces service agreement includes measurable indicators related to program reach, participant engagement, demographics, financial accountability, and service connections. In fiscal year 2025 to 2026, the program served 1,339 unduplicated individuals, exceeding the service agreement target of 300 by more than fourfold. This is the clearest quantitative indicator of program demand and demonstrates that Mano y Mano is reaching significantly more individuals than the minimum benchmark established under the contract.

The program also tracks daily participation across its two primary work models. Current reporting identifies an average of 28 daily participants, including approximately 20 participants through the van-based work crew and 8 participants through the Hotspot truck. These figures help document the program's daily operating scale and provide a baseline for assessing staffing, transportation, supervision, and participant engagement needs. Demographic data are also compiled annually, including race and ethnicity, gender, and age, which supports basic monitoring of who the program is reaching.

Mano y Mano maintains several financial and administrative accountability measures as part of its contract reporting. These include signed daily cash payout records, W-9 documentation for participants earning more than $2,000 annually, monthly expenditure reports, and an annual cost-of-service report. The program also tracks Hotspot truck calls for service and referrals to wraparound supports, showing that its role extends beyond daily work participation and includes connection to broader services.

The program's current data structure is strongest in documenting participation, operational activity, and contract compliance. Its main limitation is that longer-term participant outcomes, including substance use recovery, employment progress, and housing stability, are still documented primarily through narrative reporting. Establishing standardized outcome measures in these areas would strengthen the program's data capacity, improve consistency across reporting periods, and provide clearer evidence of participant progress over time.

Impact and Data Maturity

The program's FY2025 to 2026 performance substantially exceeded its contractual targets. It served 1,339 unique individuals against a City contract target of approximately 300 unduplicated clients, more than fourfold, reflecting deep community reach and high demand. The program supports 28 participants working per day, Monday through Friday, with 20 working via two vans on City-owned properties and 8 via two Hotspot trucks addressing unsanctioned encampments. Total annual client wage payouts reach $442,600 per the program budget.

Qualitative outcomes reinforce the quantitative picture:

- At least two participants have entered substance use recovery treatment and maintained sobriety for six or more months
- One regular participant secured full-time employment and returned to Mano y Mano to hire two individuals for his business, a direct demonstration of an economic ladder effect
- Multiple participants have used Mano y Mano earnings to maintain cell phone service, pay for utilities, make security deposits for Community of Hope-operated group homes, and address other immediate stabilization expenses

- Community feedback has been overwhelmingly positive. Participants report feeling valued by local residents and frequently receive appreciation for their services.
- Law enforcement feedback has been broadly positive, with the Las Cruces Police Department publicly highlighting the program on social media
- The program has improved relationships between Community of Hope, local businesses, and landowners affected by encampment activity near their properties

Mano y Mano has a well-established quantitative data infrastructure for a program of its type, driven in part by the City's contractual reporting requirements, with routine monthly and annual financial and service reports and systematic demographic data collection. The primary data maturity gap is in outcome tracking: the program does not yet formally track shelter placement rates, housing exits, employment outcomes, or sustained sobriety rates for participants as a cohort. Developing a structured outcome tracking system linked to Unite Us or HMIS would significantly strengthen its evidence base.

Internal Tracking

Mano y Mano maintains several internal tracking systems:

- **Daily sign-in and payment logs:** each participant signs a tracking form acknowledging receipt of cash payment, creating a daily roster and financial audit trail
- **W-9 tax forms:** collected for all participants who exceed $2,000 in annual earnings, maintained for IRS compliance
- **Monthly expenditure and service reports:** submitted to the City by the 15th of each month
- **Annual program narrative report:** submitted to the City by July 15 each year, covering expenditures, units served, and progress toward goals
- **Referral tracking:** Hotspot truck calls for service are logged via a dedicated city email address, enabling monitoring of referral volume
- **Demographic data:** race and ethnicity, gender, and age are collected for all participants and compiled annually

Referral outcomes to wraparound services are tracked by supervisors informally and reported narratively. A more structured referral outcome tracking system, potentially linked to Unite Us or HMIS, has been identified as a data development priority.

Local Successes

Mano y Mano demonstrates consistent positive trends across quantitative performance and qualitative community impact:

- **Demand far exceeding contract targets:** serving 1,339 unique individuals against a target of approximately 300 demonstrates extraordinary community need and reach, and the program has expanded from 10 daily participants to 28 in direct response to demand, a 180% capacity increase since its 2018 founding
- **Consistent growth driven by need:** since 2018 the program has grown from one van to two vans and two Hotspot trucks, with each expansion approved by the City Council following evidence of unmet demand; on the program's first day, 60 people were turned away
- **Employment ladder outcomes:** the documented case of a participant securing full-time employment and returning to hire other participants illustrates the program's potential as a genuine economic mobility pathway

- **Recovery support outcomes:** at least two documented cases of participants entering and sustaining recovery demonstrate the program's role as a bridge to health services
- **Community relations improvement:** positive feedback from the Las Cruces Police Department, businesses, community members, and city departments reflects broadening community support for homelessness response work
- **Point-in-Time survey engagement:** Community of Hope's Street Outreach team, working alongside the Hotspot trucks, achieves the highest rate of client agreement to participate in the annual Point-in-Time survey of any outreach team, a significant contribution to regional homelessness data

Scalability and Sustainability

Replicability

Mano y Mano is one of the most directly replicable models in this portfolio. Its core elements are simple, low-barrier, and adaptable to any municipality with a population experiencing homelessness and a public works or parks department with maintenance needs:

- **Municipal partnership model:** the foundation is a service agreement between a city government, providing funding, vehicles, and worksites, and a nonprofit operator, providing client engagement, supervision, and wraparound referrals, a structure replicable in any New Mexico municipality
- **Existing city assets as worksites:** assigning participants to City-owned properties for landscaping, litter removal, graffiti removal, and beautification creates municipal value while providing employment, making the program fiscally defensible as a dual-purpose investment
- **Lottery system equity:** the daily lottery with a voucher guarantee after three consecutive non-selections creates a fair, transparent access system that does not require case management infrastructure or eligibility determination
- **Campus co-location advantage:** maximum impact depends on co-location with wraparound services, so communities replicating the model should identify or develop a campus or cluster of services to which participants can be referred in real time

Resources and Constraints

The program operates under two complementary budgets: the City of Las Cruces service agreement and Community of Hope's internal allocation.

City of Las Cruces Service Agreement (FY2025 to 2026)

Line Item	Amount
Staff salaries, 3 crew leaders	$135,000
Operating supplies	$4,000
Motor oil and fuel	$12,000
Liability insurance	$4,000
Client support (participant wages)	$375,000
Total City contract (not to exceed)	$530,000

Community of Hope Internal Budget Allocation

Line Item	Amount
Gas	$19,500
Client payouts	$442,600
Administrative	$10,000
Staff wages	$185,000
Operating supplies	$11,400
Insurance	$7,500
Total Mano y Mano Budget	$676,600

The difference between the City contract ceiling of $530,000 and the Community of Hope internal budget of $676,600 reflects Community of Hope's investment of organizational resources beyond what the City funds, including additional staff wages and operating costs supported by Community of Hope's own fundraising and grants.

The program also relies on two vans provided by the City, two Hotspot trucks funded through the City agreement expansion, and a Community of Hope warehouse and staging area on the Community of Hope campus. It faces several constraints:

- **Vehicle maintenance and availability:** program cancellation is triggered by vehicle maintenance issues, creating service gaps that disproportionately impact participants who depend on daily income
- **Weather dependency:** inclement weather cancellations reduce service days, particularly in monsoon season and during rare winter storms
- **Lottery exclusion:** on high-demand days many eligible participants are turned away, and demand continues to exceed daily capacity
- **Independent contractor status:** participants are not employees of Community of Hope and receive no benefits, creating income instability that limits the program's ability to serve as a bridge to formal employment without additional workforce development support

Scalability

Mano y Mano has already demonstrated a clear scaling trajectory and has significant room for further expansion. The program has grown from one van serving 10 participants per day in 2018 to two vans and two Hotspot trucks serving 28 participants per day in 2026, with each expansion approved by the City Council following evidence of unmet need, establishing a replicable process for scaling through municipal budget advocacy. It could add vehicles and crew leaders incrementally, expand the Hotspot component into a dedicated mobile services fleet, and add a formal workforce development component to extend its impact beyond daily income.

The City's five-year renewable service agreement structure provides a model of municipal financing that other New Mexico cities could adapt, and the New Mexico Office of Housing could facilitate replication through program evaluation, technical assistance and seed funding. The primary scaling constraint is funding, since client wage payouts represent the largest budget line at $375,000 to $442,600, meaning each capacity expansion requires

proportional increases, though the dual-use value proposition makes this a strong candidate for municipal budget advocacy.

Sustainability

Mano y Mano has demonstrated strong sustainability since its 2018 founding. The current five-year renewable service agreement with the City of Las Cruces, with Year 2 of 5 currently active, provides a stable, long-term funding commitment, and each program expansion has been approved by the City Council, reflecting sustained elected-official support. By delivering both homeless services and municipal maintenance and beautification, the program creates value for two constituencies, broadening its base of political and institutional support, and its comprehensive policies and procedures, revised as recently as March 2026, demonstrate organizational maturity that supports continuity through staff transitions.

Sustainability risks include dependence on a single municipal funder, sensitivity to City budget cycles, and reliance on key organizational leadership. Diversifying funding beyond the City contract and cross-training additional program leadership would strengthen resilience.

Equity and Culture

Cultural Humility

Mano y Mano reflects cultural humility in its design and delivery. In southern New Mexico and across Latino and Hispanic cultural traditions, trabajo, or work, carries deep personal and communal significance, so by offering paid employment rather than charity the program affirms the dignity and capacity of participants in a way that resonates culturally; the program's name itself, meaning hand to hand or side by side, reflects a philosophy of mutual support rather than top-down service delivery.

Several practices reinforce this orientation:

- **Meeting people where they are:** the Hotspot truck model brings outreach and connection to individuals at encampment sites rather than requiring them to come to services, which matters for populations with historical distrust of institutions
- **Non-punitive encampment response:** Hotspot crews do not move people from active encampment sites; they clean around them and connect them with outreach staff, a harm-reduction approach that respects autonomy while addressing community impacts
- **Lottery system equity:** the random lottery, with a guaranteed voucher after three non-selections, creates an access system free from favoritism or subjective eligibility determination, giving every person who shows up an equal chance to work
- **Non-discrimination policy:** a formal policy guarantees a work environment free from discrimination on the basis of gender, race, religion, age, national origin, ancestry, sexual orientation, disability, or veteran status
- **Flexible dress code:** a provision allows staff to offer clothing swaps to participants who need appropriate attire, removing a practical barrier to participation

Demographic and Geographic Adaptability

Mano y Mano demonstrates strong geographic and demographic adaptability. Las Cruces is the second-largest city in New Mexico, situated in the Mesilla Valley on the Rio Grande, and the program's design reflects the specific geography of urban homelessness in southern New Mexico, where encampments concentrate along arroyos, near commercial corridors, and on City-owned vacant lots, by deploying Hotspot trucks to known encampment locations rather than relying on facility-based intake.

The program serves participants from age 18 through their 70s, with strong representation across working-age adults, and although predominantly male at 83%, women represent 17% of participants, with dress code accommodations reflecting attention to women's participation. By explicitly serving both people experiencing homelessness and those who are precariously housed, it reaches individuals who may not qualify for or seek traditional homeless services. It's Hotspot truck receives referrals from law enforcement, code enforcement, 311, businesses, and outreach teams, reflecting integration across the full spectrum of community contacts with unsheltered individuals. Las Cruces' proximity to the Texas border and to Ciudad Juarez means the program serves individuals whose housing histories may cross state and national lines, and the independent contractor structure provides a measure of accessibility for individuals with documentation barriers, within IRS compliance limits.

Program Improvement and Funding

Program Improvements

Based on the program's current design, data, and identified gaps, the following improvements are recommended:

- **Formal outcome tracking system:** develop a structured system, ideally linked to Unite Us or HMIS, to track referral outcomes including shelter placements, housing exits, employment placements, and sustained sobriety milestones
- **Workforce development integration:** add resume assistance, job application support, and employer partnerships to extend the program's capacity to bridge participants into permanent employment
- **Hotspot data formalization:** implement a structured log capturing encampment location, individuals present, services offered, referrals made, and outcomes, enabling analysis of Hotspot impact separately from day labor
- **Women-specific programming:** with women comprising 17% of participants, assess whether additional accommodations or safety protocols would encourage higher female participation
- **Age-specific adaptations:** with significant participation among adults 60 and older, review whether worksite demands are appropriate and consider lighter-duty assignments to expand access for seniors
- **Succession planning:** document program leadership knowledge and develop cross-training protocols to ensure continuity through transitions
- **Capacity expansion advocacy:** prepare a data-driven case for the City Council to expand daily capacity given that demand consistently exceeds the current 28-person limit

Policy and Funding Considerations

The program's proven model and strong municipal partnership position it well for expanded policy and funding support:

- **State matching funds:** the New Mexico Legislature could create a matching fund program to incentivize other municipalities to replicate the Las Cruces model, leveraging city investment with state dollars
- **HUD Emergency Solutions Grants:** the Hotspot truck's encampment outreach function may qualify for ESG street outreach funding to supplement the City contract
- **CSBG and ARPA funding:** Community Services Block Grant and remaining American Rescue Plan Act funds represent potential supplemental streams for expansion and workforce development
- **Workforce system alignment:** formal partnership with New Mexico's workforce development system could provide employment-related services at no additional cost, extending employment outcomes without proportional budget increases

- **Worker classification policy:** the independent contractor structure is compliant with current IRS guidelines but may warrant review as worker classification standards evolve, advising proactive engagement with legal counsel
- **Budget cycle advocacy:** the annual renewal structure means Community of Hope should prepare annual budget justifications documenting participant outcomes and return on investment, positioning the program for capacity expansion at each renewal

Technical Assistance

Mano y Mano has identified several technical assistance priorities:

- **Outcome measurement framework:** support developing a formal logic model and outcome measurement system connecting activities to housing, employment, and recovery outcomes
- **HMIS and Unite Us integration:** assistance connecting referral activity to Las Cruces' HMIS and the regional Unite Us network for longitudinal tracking
- **Replication toolkit development:** support packaging the model, including the service agreement template, policies and procedures, lottery design, and Hotspot protocol, into a replication guide
- **Workforce development partnerships:** assistance formalizing partnerships with employer networks, the New Mexico Workforce Connection, and vocational training providers
- **Graduate research partnership:** formalizing the program's existing engagement with NMSU graduate research could produce peer-reviewed evidence supporting replication at scale
- **External Evaluation:** Contracting an external evaluator to help establish and formalize an outcome evaluation, including logic model and outcome measures could produce peer-reviewed evidence supporting replication at scale

Data Capacity Recommendations

To strengthen its evidence base and support development as a statewide replication model, the following data investments are recommended:

- **Participant tracking number:** assign each participant a unique identifier at first enrollment to enable longitudinal tracking of participation frequency, earnings, and referrals
- **Referral outcome tracking:** develop a brief 30-day follow-up protocol to capture whether referrals to shelter, housing, recovery, or other services resulted in engagement
- **Hotspot encampment log:** implement a structured daily log capturing referral source, location, estimated camp population, services offered, contacts made, and outcomes
- **Employment outcome tracking:** create a simple flag in participant records for individuals who secure employment while participating, to document employment transition rates
- **Annual outcomes report:** develop a standardized annual outcomes report presenting demographics, referral activity, and qualitative outcomes in a format suitable for public communication and funding applications

Funding Diversity

Current funding rests overwhelmingly on the City of Las Cruces service agreement, an annual contract not to exceed $530,000 covering staff salaries, fuel, insurance, operating supplies, and client wage support. Community of Hope invests approximately $146,600 beyond the City contract from its broader fundraising, grants, and

organizational revenue, and in-kind contributions include daily participant lunches from El Caldito, City-provided vehicles, and worksite assignments from City Parks and Recreation.

Opportunities to diversify include:

- HUD Emergency Solutions Grants for the street outreach and Hotspot component
- New Mexico Office of Housing homelessness response funding
- CSBG and workforce development funding streams
- Private foundation grants focused on workforce development, homelessness, and economic mobility
- Corporate sponsorships from Las Cruces businesses that benefit from the program's beautification work

The program's heavy dependence on a single municipal funder is a sustainability risk, and diversification toward state, federal, and philanthropic streams would provide resilience against City budget fluctuations and enable capacity expansion beyond what the City contract currently supports.

Total Program Cost

The program operates under two budgets. The Community of Hope internal program budget and the City service agreement budget for FY2025 to 2026 are summarized below.

Community of Hope Internal Program Budget

Line Item	Amount
Gas	$19,500
Client payouts (participant wages)	$442,600
Administrative	$10,000
Staff wages	$185,000
Operating supplies	$11,400
Insurance	$7,500
Total Mano y Mano Program Budget	$676,600

City of Las Cruces Service Agreement Budget

Line Item	Amount
Staff salaries (3 crew leaders)	$135,000
Operating supplies	$4,000
Motor oil and fuel	$12,000
Liability insurance	$4,000
Client support (participant wages)	$375,000
Total City contract (not to exceed)	$530,000

At 1,339 unique individuals served against a total program budget of $676,600, the cost per unduplicated individual is approximately $505, a figure that includes participant wages, the largest line item at $442,600, or 65% of the total budget. Excluding wages paid directly to participants, which represent a direct income transfer to people experiencing homelessness rather than program overhead, the operational cost is approximately $175 per unduplicated individual, comparing favorably to the cost of shelter, case management, or emergency response alternatives. The program's cost structure is notable for directing the majority of expenditures directly to participants as wages rather than to administrative or facility overhead, a distinctive feature reflecting its core value proposition of economic empowerment over institutional service delivery.

Engagement Credits Model

SIEMBRA CHARTER HIGH SCHOOL

Program Overview

Program Snapshot

Program Name	Siembra Charter High School
Location	524 Central Ave. SW, Albuquerque, NM 87102
Contact	Edward Ramirez, Interim Executive Director | e.ramirez@siembraabq.org | 505-243-3308
Program Cost	No additional cost. Engagement Credits are advisor-facing and embedded within existing school operations and course structures.

Staffing

The Engagement Credits model does not require dedicated program staff beyond the existing advisor infrastructure. Implementation is distributed across Siembra's advisor team, which works with students in assigned cohorts to identify, document, and submit engagement credit applications. The Student Support Team and Success Coaches help identify students eligible for case-management-related credits under the Health and Life Management pathway, and Community Engagement staff help identify Career Readiness credits.

Three or more staff members are available to participate in evaluation interviews and data sharing. The organization has indicated 16 or more hours of availability for evaluation engagement and willingness to participate in a one- to two-hour site visit.

Program Design and Operations

Intended Outcomes

The Engagement Credits model rests on a foundational insight: students experiencing homelessness, housing instability, and poverty are already doing sophisticated, demanding work, including caregiving, managing households, holding employment, navigating systems, providing bilingual translation, and surviving hardship. Traditional schools either ignore this work or penalize it when it interferes with attendance and academic performance. Siembra's model converts it into academic credit, applied through state-approved course codes and documented through a student exhibition.

The program's intended outcomes are reduced elective credit deficiency, accelerated graduation timelines, decreased dropout risk, improved school belonging and reduced stigma for students experiencing homelessness and housing instability, demonstrated competencies linked to workforce readiness, and a more equitable academic recognition system for students whose lived experiences are educationally valuable but traditionally invisible.

Populations Served

Siembra Charter High School serves 579 students in grades 9 through 12 in Albuquerque, designed for highly mobile and underserved youth, including students who are credit-deficient, overage for grade, or who have not succeeded in traditional high school settings.

Gender

Gender	Share
Female	54.6%
Male	43.7%
Non-binary or other	1.7%

Race and Ethnicity (students may be multi-identified)

Group	Share
Hispanic	80.8%
White	85.0%
American Indian	7.9%
Black	6.6%
Asian	1.2%
Pacific Islander	0.7%

Additional Demographics

Measure	Value
Students with IEPs	144 (24.9%)
Primary language English	99.0%
Primary language Spanish	1.0%

Grade Distribution

Grade	Share
9th	26.9%
10th	24.4%
11th	22.3%
12th	26.4%

Among the student body, 22 students, 3.8% of enrollment, are identified as McKinney-Vento homeless. Notably, 50% of these students are in 9th grade, the highest-risk year for dropout, yet 9th grade has the model's lowest participation rate, suggesting an opportunity to expand early outreach. The Engagement Credits model is relevant to the full school population, not only McKinney-Vento students: qualifying experiences such as employment,

caregiving, medical hardship, housing instability, and translation affect a substantial proportion of Siembra's students, and in Fall 2025, 366 students, or 63% of enrollment, earned Engagement Credits.

Evidence and Data

Quantitative Indicators

The model tracks credit accumulation, demographics, and cohort progress. In the Fall 2025 to 2026 semester, 366 students earned 366 Engagement Credits across ten categories. Credits by grade level were concentrated in the highest dropout-risk years:

Credits by Grade (Fall 2025 to 2026)

Grade	Credits Earned
9th grade	39
10th grade	125
11th grade	150
12th grade	52

Credits by Category (Fall 2025 to 2026)

Category	Credits	Share
Work Credit	134	36.6%
Health & Life Management	61	16.7%
Life Skills	52	14.2%
Personal Development	45	12.3%
Child & Human Development	43	11.7%
Paid/Unpaid Internships	15	4.1%
Driver's Education	12	3.3%
Communication Leaders	3	0.8%
Outside Sports	2	0.5%
Basketball	2	0.5%

The program also maintains individual cohort credit tracking across expected graduation years from 2020 through 2026, documenting each student's credits at Siembra entry against current credits and anticipated graduation year. The model operates at no additional program cost.

Impact and Data Maturity

In Fall 2025, 366 Engagement Credits earned by 366 students in a single semester represents remarkable scale for a school of 579, with approximately 63% of enrolled students accessing the pathway in one semester, indicating broad institutional adoption rather than a niche accommodation.

Work Credit was the largest category, reflecting the economic reality that a significant proportion of Siembra students are employed, often out of necessity. Recognizing this work academically is essential to maintaining engagement while students navigate economic pressures that would otherwise push them toward dropout. The concentration of credits in 10th and 11th grade aligns with the period of greatest dropout risk, suggesting the model functions as intended as a re-engagement and retention tool, while the Health and Life Management, Life Skills, and Child and Human Development categories capture students navigating medical hardship, housing instability, system involvement, and caregiving responsibilities.

Review of the Cohort Credit Tracker reveals multiple students who entered Siembra with very low credit counts, some with 0 to 5 credits after multiple years in high school, who have made significant progress toward graduation, several now carrying 20 to 27 or more credits toward the 24-credit requirement. The model is in an early-to-intermediate stage of outcome data maturity: it has strong operational data and systematic documentation, but longitudinal outcome data, including graduation rates for participating versus non-participating students, attendance changes, and post-secondary outcomes, is not yet available and is identified as a priority. The program's own materials note that preliminary data suggests the framework is effective and that long-term outcomes are still being evaluated, an honest assessment that positions the model for more rigorous evaluation.

Internal Tracking

The Engagement Credits model maintains several internal tracking systems:

- Submission tracker documenting each required evidence item for the promising practice review
- Semester credit accumulation data by student, category, and grade level
- Cohort Credit Tracker recording entry credits, current credits, and anticipated graduation year across cohorts from 2020 through 2026
- Transcript records, with Engagement Credits appearing on official transcripts under state-approved course codes
- McKinney-Vento data, with 22 identified homeless students tracked through standard NMPED reporting

Local Successes

Siembra's model demonstrates positive trends through program scale, student-reported impact, and cohort credit recovery:

- **Rapid and broad adoption:** 366 credits earned in a single semester by approximately 63% of the student body demonstrates genuine school-wide implementation rather than a small pilot
- **Work Credit as an economic equity indicator:** by crediting the work many students already perform to support their households, the school reduces the traditional binary that forces lower-income students to choose between school and economic necessity
- **Cohort credit recovery momentum:** multiple students who enrolled with very low credit counts, including several with 0 to 3 credits after years in high school, now track toward graduation
- **Student-reported outcomes:** participants report feeling recognized and valued, reduced stigma, stronger advisor relationships, and increased motivation to remain in school
- **Policy alignment:** the model aligns with McKinney-Vento protections, trauma-informed practice, and competency-based learning frameworks, making it nationally relevant

- **Zero additional cost:** achieving 366 credit engagements at no additional cost demonstrates exceptional fiscal efficiency that scales with student need

Scalability and Sustainability

Replicability

The Engagement Credits model is among the most replicable practices in this portfolio. Its requirements are minimal: state course code alignment, an advisor or counselor infrastructure, and a philosophical commitment to treat lived experience as academically legitimate. It requires no new facilities, no new staff, and no program budget.

- **State course code framework:** Siembra's mapping of credit categories to existing NMPED course codes is directly transferable to any New Mexico public or charter high school without new course approval
- **Advisor-embedded design:** because the model runs through existing advisor and counselor relationships, any school with a counseling or advisory infrastructure can implement it
- **Exhibition format flexibility:** students may present in four formats, speak, show, write, or create, accommodating different communication styles, language backgrounds, and accessibility needs
- **Charter school network:** the New Mexico Charter School Association could facilitate adoption across schools serving similar populations in Albuquerque, Santa Fe, Gallup, Las Cruces, and beyond
- **National frameworks:** the model aligns with national competency-based education and credit-for-prior-learning frameworks, positioning it for replication beyond New Mexico

Resources and Constraints

The model's most distinctive feature is its near-zero additional cost. There is no additional direct program cost; the only inputs are advisor time to introduce the credit, co-develop and practice the exhibition, and facilitate the presentation, along with administrative time for credit submission, course code assignment, and transcript recording, all embedded in existing school systems. Exhibition materials are minimal.

The model faces a few constraints:

- **Advisor time capacity:** as the model scales to more students, advisor time investment increases, and high caseloads may limit the depth of exhibition preparation support
- **Longitudinal data gap:** the absence of formal outcome tracking for participating students limits the evidence base for grant applications and policy advocacy
- **State approval continuity:** course code alignment depends on continued NMPED recognition, and changes to state curriculum standards could require course code updates

Scalability

The model is inherently scalable because its primary input is student experience, an unlimited resource, and its primary cost is advisor time, which scales with existing staffing rather than requiring new investment. Within Siembra, raising the 9th grade participation rate is the highest-leverage opportunity, since 9th graders are most at risk of dropout and disproportionately include homeless students. Across New Mexico, the model requires minimal adaptation, and Siembra could share its course code mapping, exhibition framework, and advisor protocols with other schools at essentially no cost. Further expansion could add new credit categories aligned with additional student experiences and explore whether Engagement Credits can count toward dual enrollment or community college competency recognition.

Sustainability

The model has exceptional sustainability characteristics. Because it requires no additional budget, it cannot be cut by budget reductions; its sustainability is institutional rather than financial, dependent on advisor staff and documented institutional knowledge. Grounding each credit category in NMPED-approved course codes protects the model from administrative challenge and ensures lasting transcript legitimacy, and the genuine student ownership the model generates is a further non-financial sustainability asset. Key risks are advisor turnover without adequate onboarding documentation, changes to NMPED course code frameworks, and the absence of dedicated institutional leadership if Siembra's leadership transitions.

Equity and Culture

Cultural Humility

The Engagement Credits model demonstrates cultural humility at its conceptual core. Its foundational premise, that students are already doing meaningful work that deserves recognition, is a direct rejection of the deficit framing that dominates traditional responses to students experiencing poverty, homelessness, and instability. Where deficit framing treats these students as broken, Siembra's model treats them as competent, positioning the school as a learner of the student's experience rather than a judge of it.

Several design choices reinforce this orientation:

- **Student narrative ownership and safety:** the exhibition framework centers student agency, with participation voluntary and students free to present only to their advisor and family, respecting autonomy and trauma history
- **Bilingual and translation recognition:** the Communication Skills credit explicitly recognizes students who provide translation for monolingual households, a responsibility disproportionately carried by immigrant and first-generation students and culturally significant where 80.8% of students identify as Hispanic
- **Recognition of caregiving as competency:** the Child and Human Development credit formally acknowledges caregiving for children, siblings, and family members, challenging gender and class assumptions embedded in traditional academic hierarchies
- **Exhibition format plurality:** allowing students to speak, show, write, or create acknowledges that academic demonstration takes multiple forms, which is culturally responsive for communities with strong oral, artistic, and performance traditions

Demographic and Geographic Adaptability

The model is designed for and continuously adapted to the demographic realities of Albuquerque's most vulnerable high school students. The Cohort Credit Tracker documents students who arrived after years in other high schools with near-zero credit accumulation, and the elective credit pathway is designed specifically to help them close graduation gaps more rapidly than traditional coursework allows. With half of McKinney-Vento students in 9th grade, the model has a clear opportunity to design targeted 9th grade outreach before disengagement becomes entrenched.

Albuquerque's economic landscape, with significant youth unemployment, housing cost pressures, and limited public transportation, creates specific barriers that the model addresses by meeting students where they are economically and experientially rather than requiring them to conform to a schedule designed for more stable lives. The inclusion of CYFD and Juvenile Justice Services involvement as qualifying experiences for Health and Life Management credits reflects Albuquerque's specific context, where youth involvement with these systems is often a direct consequence of housing and family instability.

Program Improvement and Funding

Program Improvements

The following improvements are recommended to strengthen the model's impact and evidence base:

- **9th grade targeted outreach:** building an engagement credit introduction into standard 9th grade onboarding would bring the model's protective benefits to students at their point of greatest vulnerability
- **Pre- and post-engagement survey:** a brief validated survey measuring school belonging, recognition, and academic motivation before and after the exhibition would provide quantitative evidence of impact
- **Graduation outcome tracking:** linking the Cohort Credit Tracker to graduation outcomes would show whether participants graduate at higher rates or in shorter time
- **McKinney-Vento analysis:** analyzing participation specifically among the 22 identified homeless students would assess whether the model reaches its highest-need population
- **Advisor onboarding documentation:** a formal onboarding guide would ensure consistent implementation and reduce vulnerability to staff turnover
- **Category review:** an annual review of credit categories against students' actual experiences would identify emerging needs to add as qualifying experiences

Policy and Funding Considerations

The model's zero-cost structure means it does not require traditional program funding, but several policy and funding considerations would strengthen its evidence base and facilitate replication:

- **McKinney-Vento alignment and funding:** the model's relevance to McKinney-Vento-eligible students positions it as a documented best practice, with subgrant funds able to support evaluation, documentation, and replication
- **Competency-based education policy:** New Mexico's movement toward competency-based graduation requirements creates a natural alignment, and formal NMPED recognition would strengthen legitimacy and accelerate adoption
- **Research and evaluation funding:** an evaluation or a quasi-experimental study of the model's impact on graduation, dropout prevention, and belonging, generating the evidence base for national replication
- **Alternative education dissemination:** sharing the model through national charter and dropout-prevention networks would extend its reach to comparable schools
- **Dual enrollment articulation:** working with CNM or UNM to explore whether Engagement Credit competencies can satisfy dual enrollment or prior learning requirements would extend impact to post-secondary access

Technical Assistance

Siembra has identified several technical assistance priorities:

- **Evaluation framework development:** assistance designing a rigorous quasi-experimental evaluation comparing graduation, attendance, and dropout risk for participants versus non-participants
- **NMPED engagement:** support facilitating dialogue with NMPED's alternative and homeless education divisions on formal recognition and course code protection
- **Replication toolkit:** assistance developing a practitioner guide, including course code mapping, exhibition framework, advisor protocols, and assessment rubrics

- **Post-secondary articulation:** guidance on pursuing CNM or UNM prior learning assessment recognition for credit categories such as Work Credit and Child and Human Development

Data Capacity Recommendations

To build the model's evidence base from early promising data toward established best practice, the following phased investments are recommended:

Phase 1 (Immediate)

- Implement a pre- and post-exhibition school belonging and engagement survey
- Disaggregate Fall 2025 credit data by McKinney-Vento status to check whether homeless students access the model at proportionate rates
- Establish a consistent semester-by-semester tracking format to enable year-over-year trend analysis

Phase 2 (6 to 12 Months)

- Link the Cohort Credit Tracker to graduation data to produce a preliminary graduation rate comparison
- Track attendance changes before and after first credit participation
- Produce an annual Engagement Credits impact report for stakeholders, funders, and NMPED

Phase 3 (Year 2 and Beyond)

- Commission a formal evaluation with a comparison group to generate causal evidence on dropout prevention
- Document individual student trajectories, with consent, illustrating the model's contribution to graduation, post-secondary enrollment, or workforce entry

Funding Diversity

The Engagement Credits model has no dedicated funding requirement. It is sustained entirely through Siembra's existing state per-pupil funding allocation, which covers advisor and administrative staff time as part of standard school operations. External funding needs are therefore limited to evaluation, documentation, and replication support rather than ongoing operations, an exceptional fiscal efficiency. Funding opportunities for that purpose include:

- U.S. Department of Education McKinney-Vento homeless education grants for evaluation and documentation
- NMPED alternative education program funding for statewide replication technical assistance
- Foundation grants focused on equitable education, dropout prevention, and competency-based learning, including the Kellogg, Robert Wood Johnson, and Gates foundations
- New Mexico Community Foundation and McCune Charitable Foundation support for local evaluation
- SAMHSA prevention grants for the trauma-informed education components of the model

Total Program Cost

The Engagement Credits model operates at no additional annual cost. Per the program's submission materials, there is no additional cost to run the program because it is an advisor-facing role embedded in existing operations. The 366 Engagement Credits earned in Fall 2025 were therefore earned at zero marginal cost, with the only program cost being advisor time supported by standard per-pupil state education funding.

The value proposition is substantial. For students who are credit-deficient and at risk of dropout, each half-credit earned represents one step closer to the 24 credits required for graduation. Given that the national lifetime cost of a high school dropout in reduced tax revenue and increased social service use is estimated at $292,000 per student,

a model that accelerates graduation at zero marginal cost for high-risk students generates an extraordinary return on investment and represents both an equitable and a fiscally sound public practice.

UNM Center for Inclusive Health Mobile Medical Team

STREET MEDICINE PROGRAM AT THE UNIVERSITY OF NEW MEXICO HEALTH SCIENCES CENTER

Program Overview

Program Snapshot

Program Name	UNM Center for Inclusive Health Mobile Medical Team (MMT) / Street Medicine Program
Operated By	University of New Mexico Health Sciences Center, Center for Inclusive Health
Location	1001 Medical Arts Ave NE, Albuquerque, NM 87131
Contact	Lindsay Fox, Director | lefox@salud.unm.edu | 505-379-1043

Staffing

The Mobile Medical Team operates with a multidisciplinary clinical team. Its 2025 staffing structure spans clinical leadership, providers, and outreach roles:

Role	Function
Medical Director (MD)	Overall medical leadership, clinical oversight, policy development, and quality assurance
Clinicians (CNP/PA/MD/DO)	Diagnose and treat illness, prescribe medications, order tests, perform procedures, and manage chronic conditions, with specialties in Internal Medicine, Family Medicine, and Psychiatry
Registered Nurse (RN)	Added in 2025; coordinates patient care, educates patients, and increases capacity for follow-up and continuity
Certified Medical Assistants (2)	Clinical support (vitals, records) and administrative support (scheduling, communication) for four clinicians
Community Health Worker	Hired in 2025; provides outreach, navigation, advocacy, and connection to community services

Program Design and Operations

Intended Outcomes

The team operates on a Street Medicine model grounded in the principle that care must be delivered where patients live, not where the healthcare system is most convenient. By bringing advanced clinical care, including psychiatric treatment, addiction medicine, chronic disease management, and wound care, directly to people who are rough sleeping, the program connects field-based service delivery to outcomes at the individual, structural, and population levels.

The program's intended outcomes are decreased emergency department visits and hospitalizations among the rough-sleeping population, improved management of substance use disorders, psychiatric conditions, and chronic diseases in the field, reduced infectious disease transmission, and increased engagement of unsheltered individuals with the broader healthcare system.

Populations Served

The Mobile Medical Team's primary target population is individuals experiencing homelessness or who are precariously unhoused and rough sleeping in Bernalillo County and Albuquerque. Within this population, the program prioritizes individuals at risk of overdose, recently incarcerated, pregnant or postpartum, using illicit substances, living with severe mental illness, or managing complex chronic medical conditions. In 2025 the program served 716 unique patients across 1,319 total encounters.

Patient Gender (2025)

Gender	Share
Male	54%
Female	46%

Patient Age (2025)

Age Group	Share
Age 51 or older	36.43%
Under age 50	63.57%

The near-equal gender distribution is notably more balanced than typical homelessness data, suggesting the program may be reaching women who are rough sleeping at higher rates than traditional shelter-based programs, while the age profile reflects a growing aging homeless population in Albuquerque.

Top Diagnoses (2025)

- Opiate Use Disorder, including fentanyl
- Schizoaffective disorders
- Amphetamine Use Disorder, including methamphetamine
- Post-traumatic stress disorder
- Type 2 diabetes
- Hypertension
- Asthma and COPD
- Cellulitis and wound infections
- Anxiety disorders
- Orthopedic pain

This diagnostic profile reflects the overlapping vulnerabilities typical of Albuquerque's rough-sleeping population: substance use disorders compounded by severe psychiatric illness, chronic medical disease, and trauma exposure. Many patients present with multiple simultaneous diagnoses, a complexity that renders them particularly difficult to serve through episodic or specialist-only care models.

Evidence and Data

Quantitative Indicators

The mobile team tracks indicators across service volume, clinical care, public health coordination, and operations. Patient encounters nearly doubled in a single year, rising from 689 in 2024 to 1,319 in 2025, with 716 unique patients served in 2025 and an average of 1.84 encounters per patient, a sign of meaningful continuity of care. Clinical tracking covers the most frequent diagnoses, onsite dispensing of 238 prescriptions from July to December 2025, and long-acting injectable antipsychotic administration. Public health measures include emerging-disease identification, coordination with the New Mexico Department of Health, and hospitalization and 911 utilization trends followed alongside system partners. Operationally, the team monitors insurance and Medicaid billing rates, staffing and FTE by role, and hours of operation, which expanded to 30 hours per week in 2025.

Impact and Data Maturity

The program's 2025 performance shows dramatic growth alongside high clinical complexity. Total encounters rose from 689 in 2024 to 1,319 in 2025, a 91.4% year-over-year increase driven by expansion to 30 hours per week and the addition of the street pharmacy, an RN, a Community Health Worker, and a second medical assistant. The 716 unique patients served demonstrate that the majority of encounters reached new individuals, while the continuity ratio confirms meaningful follow-up for a subset of high-need patients. Through the street pharmacy, 238 prescriptions were dispensed in six months, directly addressing a structural access barrier.

Clinical impact is distinctive for a street medicine program. The team administers evidence-based treatments rarely accessible to rough-sleeping individuals through traditional channels, including buprenorphine for opioid and fentanyl use disorder and long-acting injectable antipsychotics in the field. Psychiatrist participation on street rounds and coordination with Psychiatric Emergency Services have reduced psychiatric crises among enrolled patients, and the program's identification of shigella and HIV cases with NMDOH coordination demonstrates a contribution to population-level public health beyond individual care.

The Mobile Medical Team has moved from informal operation in 2021 to formalization in 2023 to systematic data collection from 2024 onward, now maintaining structured clinical encounter records, demographic tracking, diagnostic coding, and prescription dispensing logs, with comparative data available for 2024 and 2025. The primary data maturity opportunity is in longitudinal outcome tracking: the program does not yet systematically document individual-level outcomes such as housing placement, sustained sobriety, or long-term chronic disease control, and developing outcome metrics linked to emergency department diversion and HMIS would significantly strengthen its evidence base.

Internal Tracking

The team maintains structured internal data systems. Clinical encounter records document the date, encounter type, ICD-10 diagnoses, treatments, and medications, while a unique patient registry tracks individuals across encounters to produce unduplicated counts and continuity metrics. Demographic data, including age and gender, is recorded for every patient, and a dispensing log captures each prescription by medication type, volume, and funding source. Long-acting injectable administration is logged to monitor treatment continuity, emerging diagnoses are reported to the New Mexico Department of Health through disease-surveillance reports, and monthly shift schedules and operating hours track program capacity. All clinical data is protected under HIPAA and governed by a formal data-sharing protocol: de-identified aggregate data is available to the evaluation team, while any patient-level access requires review for HIPAA compliance and applicable regulatory requirements.

Local Successes

The program's data shows consistent, positive trends across service volume, clinical complexity, and population-level impact. Encounters grew 91.4% in a single year, from 689 in 2024 to 1,319 in 2025, reflecting both expanded capacity and rising community need. The team's infectious-disease surveillance, including identification of shigella and HIV cases and coordination with the New Mexico Department of Health, has contributed to documented citywide decreases in hospitalizations and 911 utilization. Dispensing 238 prescriptions in six months demonstrates real demand for point-of-care medication and the program's ability to close the gap between prescription and treatment. Its near-equal gender distribution is notable in a field where women are frequently underrepresented, likely a reflection of the program's trauma-informed approach. Delivering evidence-based psychiatric and addiction care in the field, administering olanzapine, Suboxone, and long-acting injectables on the street, is rare in street medicine nationally and reaches the most complex cases. Finally, the ability to anticipate and respond to an aging population, increased female representation, and emerging infectious diseases before they become crises sets the program apart from reactive models.

Scalability and Sustainability

Replicability

The Mobile Medical Team is replicable across New Mexico and nationally, with the academic medical center partnership being a particularly transferable element:

- **Academic medical center anchor:** UNM Health Sciences Center provides clinical infrastructure, medical oversight, licensure, malpractice coverage, Medicaid billing capacity, and a training pipeline, and other communities with academic or regional medical centers could develop analogous partnerships
- **Medicaid billing sustainability:** billing Medicaid for street medicine encounters creates a reimbursement stream not dependent on grant funding, viable statewide given Centennial Care's coverage of much of the unhoused population
- **Modular staffing model:** the clinician, medical assistant, RN, and Community Health Worker structure is adaptable to different resource levels, allowing a smaller community to begin with a single clinician and CHW before scaling
- **Public health integration:** established coordination with the New Mexico Department of Health for disease surveillance provides a pathway for other regions to embed street medicine within state public health infrastructure

Rural and frontier communities face particular challenges due to limited provider availability and geographic distance, but telehealth integration and mobile units adapted for long-distance travel could extend the model to communities including Gallup, Farmington, Silver City, and Taos, and tribal health programs may have infrastructure to support similar outreach.

Resources and Constraints

The program requires a clinical staffing model led by a Medical Director with clinicians, registered nurses, certified medical assistants, Community Health Workers, and administrative support, along with significant infrastructure: four mobile medical units, a HIPAA-compliant electronic health records system capable of field documentation and Medicaid billing, a compliant street pharmacy supply chain, malpractice and liability coverage for street settings, and coordination agreements with NMDOH, Albuquerque emergency services, and UNM specialty programs.

The program faces several constraints:

- **HIPAA and regulatory complexity:** clinical data governance requirements create barriers to data sharing and require dedicated compliance resources
- **Insurance disruptions:** Medicaid and SNAP disruptions frequently interrupt treatment continuity, particularly for injectable psychiatric medications, a priority the program plans to address in 2026 through benefits navigation
- **Missing documentation:** patients without identification, insurance cards, or stable contact information create challenges for billing and follow-up
- **Provider recruitment and retention:** recruiting clinicians willing to practice the physically and emotionally demanding specialty of street medicine is a persistent workforce challenge
- **Engagement and retention for substance use disorders:** despite available treatments, engagement and retention remain challenging among the rough-sleeping population

Scalability

The mobile team has a documented and active scaling plan. Its goal is to expand from the current team to four mobile units over three years, increasing coverage across Albuquerque's rough-sleeping population and extending to higher-need areas and demographic groups. The program demonstrated capacity for rapid scaling by growing from four half-days per week to 30 hours per week in 2025, and its staffing model scales modularly, since each additional unit requires a clinician, medical assistant, RN, and Community Health Worker. Medicaid billing serves as a scale mechanism, since reimbursement revenue grows with patient volume, partially funding additional capacity, and the model could anchor a statewide New Mexico Street Medicine Network with UNM providing clinical supervision and quality standards. The key scaling constraint is provider recruitment, which integrating street medicine rotations into UNM medical and nursing curricula would help address.

Sustainability

The team has strong structural sustainability factors. The UNM Health Sciences Center anchor provides institutional infrastructure, clinical oversight, and administrative support that would be cost-prohibitive for a standalone nonprofit to replicate, and Medicaid billing creates a recurring revenue stream that reduces dependence on grant funding over time, with value-based care contracts representing an additional pathway as managed care organizations recognize street medicine's cost-effectiveness. The transition from informal operation to formalized program to systematic data collection reflects institutional investment in sustainability, and the NMDOH partnership reinforces it through shared institutional interest.

Sustainability risks include reliance on private donor funding for the street pharmacy, currently funded by a single donor with transition to a sustainable source identified as a priority, along with provider recruitment and retention challenges and the complexity of maintaining HIPAA-compliant data systems in a field-based setting.

Equity and Culture

Cultural Humility

The UNMCIH Mobile Medical Team demonstrates cultural humility through its clinical model, workforce composition, and patient engagement. Trauma-informed care is a core clinical competency rather than an add-on, recognizing that the majority of rough-sleeping patients, and particularly women, have significant trauma histories. The fundamental architecture of street medicine, going to patients rather than requiring them to come to a facility, is itself an act of cultural humility, acknowledging that traditional healthcare settings are inaccessible

or hostile for many unsheltered individuals due to past negative experiences, distrust of authority, dress codes, wait times, and documentation requirements.

Several further practices reinforce this orientation:

- **Social determinants as healthcare:** the goal of helping patients maintain Medicaid, Medicare, and SNAP benefits treats administrative navigation as a clinical function, recognizing that insurance lapses and housing transitions are health determinants
- **Community Health Worker integration:** a CHW connected to the community bridges cultural and linguistic gaps and builds trust that credentialed providers alone cannot always establish
- **Gender-responsive delivery:** the near-equal gender distribution suggests the program's non-judgmental approach has reached women who often avoid mixed-gender service settings due to safety concerns
- **Responsiveness to Indigenous patients:** integration within UNM Health Sciences Center, which has long-standing relationships with tribal communities, positions the program to serve Native American individuals displaced from their home communities

Demographic and Geographic Adaptability

The Mobile Medical Team demonstrates adaptability across the specific demographic and geographic context of Albuquerque and Bernalillo County. Its systematic tracking of demographic shifts, specifically the aging homeless population and increasing female representation, enables proactive adaptation of clinical protocols, and identifying top diagnoses annually allows the program to prepare for the actual disease burden rather than assuming a static patient profile. Operating four units across multiple shifts per week allows coverage of multiple areas of unsheltered concentration across a large urban footprint, including the Rail Yards, the Westside, and the International District.

The program also adapts its clinical focus in real time, as shown by its rapid identification and coordinated response to shigella and HIV outbreaks, and its use of long-acting injectable antipsychotics rather than daily oral medications represents a clinical adaptation designed specifically for patients whose housing instability makes daily medication management nearly impossible.

Program Improvement and Funding

Program Improvements

Based on 2025 experience and stated FY2026 goals, the following improvements are underway or recommended:

- **Benefits navigation integration:** beginning in 2026, develop formal pathways to help patients maintain Medicaid, Medicare, and SNAP benefits, addressing the leading cause of treatment interruption
- **Integrated care as standard:** make integrated medical, psychiatric, wound, and social care the standard across all units so no patient receives only single-domain care
- **Workforce training continuity:** continue trauma-informed training for all staff levels, including new CHW and RN hires, as the team grows
- **Specialist partnership strengthening:** formalize referral and consultation pathways with UNM specialty programs for high-acuity patients beyond street medicine's scope
- **Street pharmacy sustainability:** transition the pharmacy from private donor funding to diversified sources such as manufacturer patient assistance programs, 340B pricing, and dedicated grants
- **Longitudinal outcome tracking:** develop a structured framework to document housing placement, sustained sobriety, chronic disease control, and ER diversion for high-frequency patients over time

- **Medical education integration:** formalize street medicine rotations within UNM medical, nursing, and PA curricula to build the provider pipeline

Policy and Funding Considerations

The team is well positioned to benefit from and contribute to several policy and funding frameworks:

- **Medicaid value-based contracting:** as the evidence for reducing ER utilization grows, Centennial Care managed care organizations should be engaged to develop value-based arrangements that reimburse for avoided hospitalizations and ER visits, not just individual encounters
- **340B Drug Pricing Program:** qualifying for 340B pricing would dramatically reduce the cost of the street pharmacy and support medication access sustainability
- **HRSA Health Center Program:** FQHC status or partnership with an existing FQHC would provide enhanced Medicaid reimbursement and HRSA grant funding
- **State appropriations:** the program's outcomes align with legislative priorities for behavioral health and homelessness, and a statewide street medicine line item would enable replication beyond Albuquerque
- **Federal research grants:** the emerging evidence base on substance use disorder treatment in street settings is a strong candidate for SAMHSA and National Institute on Drug Abuse research and demonstration funding

Technical Assistance

The mobile team has identified several technical assistance priorities:

- **HIPAA-compliant data sharing framework:** assistance developing a data governance protocol and sharing agreement template that enables evaluation partnerships, HMIS integration, and research while maintaining HIPAA compliance, the program's most immediate need
- **Outcome measurement framework:** support developing a logic model and outcome system connecting encounters to housing, ER diversion, and long-term health outcomes
- **HMIS integration:** assistance connecting patient records to Albuquerque's HMIS, with appropriate de-identification and consent, to track housing trajectories
- **Value-based care contracting support:** assistance engaging Centennial Care managed care organizations to develop reimbursement arrangements recognizing street medicine's cost-effectiveness
- **Street medicine curriculum development:** support formalizing training materials and clinical protocols into an exportable curriculum for replication sites statewide

Data Capacity Recommendations

To strengthen the program's data infrastructure and support its development as a replicable statewide model, the following investments are recommended:

- **Standardized encounter documentation:** ensure consistent ICD-10 coding across all providers and units for reliable trend analysis and billing accuracy
- **Longitudinal cohort tracking:** designate a subset of high-frequency patients for outcome tracking, including housing status, ER utilization, sobriety milestones, and chronic disease markers
- **Emergency department diversion metric:** establish a formal methodology for estimating ER diversion attributable to the Mobile Medical Team's care, in partnership with UNM Hospital and Presbyterian Hospital
- **Race and ethnicity disaggregation:** expand demographic data to include race and ethnicity to assess equitable reach across Albuquerque's diverse unhoused population

- **Street pharmacy outcome tracking:** track adherence outcomes for patients receiving onsite dispensed medications versus those referred externally, to quantify the value of point-of-care dispensing
- **Annual benchmarking report:** develop a standardized annual report presenting encounter volume, demographics, top diagnoses, and trends consistently across years

Funding Diversity

Current funding is weighted toward institutional support and Medicaid reimbursement. UNM Health Sciences Center provides core program infrastructure, clinical oversight, and administrative support; Medicaid through Centennial Care reimburses billable encounters, providing a recurring revenue stream scaled to patient volume; some patients carry private insurance billed for encounters; and the street pharmacy is currently funded by a private donor, a significant service element with an identified sustainability gap. Opportunities to diversify include:

- HRSA Health Center Program grants and FQHC enhanced reimbursement
- SAMHSA grants for substance use disorder treatment and harm reduction
- National Institute on Drug Abuse research and demonstration grants
- New Mexico Legislature appropriations for street medicine and mobile health
- New Mexico Office of Housing homelessness response funding
- 340B Drug Pricing Program access for street pharmacy sustainability
- Value-based care contracts with Centennial Care managed care organizations
- National health equity funders, including the Robert Wood Johnson and Kresge foundations

Diversification toward federal grants and value-based care contracts would significantly strengthen sustainability and scaling capacity, particularly for program expansion and the street pharmacy.

Total Program Cost

Full program cost information was not provided in submitted materials. Based on program scope and staffing, the cost components include:

- Staff salaries and benefits for the Medical Director, clinicians, RN, two medical assistants, Community Health Worker, and administrative support, the largest cost component given the clinical staffing required
- Mobile medical unit vehicles, including purchase, maintenance, fuel, and equipment for four units
- Clinical supplies and equipment, including point-of-care diagnostics, wound care, medications, and Narcan
- Street pharmacy medication procurement and dispensing supplies, currently funded by a private donor
- A HIPAA-compliant electronic health records and billing system with mobile field documentation
- Malpractice and liability insurance
- Administrative and compliance costs, including Medicaid billing, HIPAA compliance, and quality assurance

Medicaid and private insurance reimbursements offset a portion of program costs, and the program leverages the Medicaid billing model specifically to reduce net cost to grant and institutional funding. The program should develop a full cost-per-encounter and cost-per-unique-patient analysis in the next reporting cycle, incorporating all revenue offsets, to enable comparison with emergency department costs for the same population and to make the case for value-based reimbursement arrangements.

Urban Alchemy

STREET OUTREACH AND INTERIM HOUSING

Program Overview

Program Snapshot

Program Name	Urban Alchemy, Santa Fe, New Mexico
Operated By	Urban Alchemy, a California-based nonprofit founded in 2018, under contract with the City of Santa Fe
Program Components	Three integrated programs: the Oasis public-space healing site (2801 Cerrillos Rd), the LOVE street outreach team, and the Agape House low-barrier interim housing program
Workforce Model	Over 95% of Urban Alchemy employees, including leadership, have lived experience of incarceration and/or homelessness

Urban Alchemy operates three integrated programs in Santa Fe that together form an end-to-end continuum, meeting people where they are, building relationships, and bridging them toward housing stability. The Oasis functions as a trauma-informed community park open to all residents; the LOVE outreach team proactively connects individuals experiencing unsheltered homelessness to services; and the Agape House provides transitional shelter for adults moving off the streets. Urban Alchemy now employs over 1,300 staff nationally, operating in California, Alabama, Oregon, Texas, Georgia, and New Mexico.

Staffing

The Santa Fe programs are staffed by a multi-role team spanning all three components, led by Project Director Mike Anderer, Chief Administrative Officer and Executive Sponsor of New Mexico operations. The Oasis site operates 7:00 AM to 7:00 PM seven days per week with outreach supervisors and practitioners per shift; the LOVE outreach team deploys supervisors and practitioners across designated zones; and care coordination staff support service planning and housing navigation for Agape House residents, with shared administrative and operational support from Urban Alchemy's central team.

All frontline Practitioners are trained in de-escalation, trauma-informed care, motivational interviewing, harm reduction, and Narcan administration prior to deployment. Urban Alchemy prioritizes hiring individuals with lived experience of homelessness, substance use, or justice system involvement, as well as those with cultural and linguistic ties to the communities served.

Program Design and Operations

Intended Outcomes

Urban Alchemy's theory of change rests on a premise validated by growing research: peer-based, lived-experience-informed interventions produce stronger engagement outcomes with populations that have historically resisted or been failed by traditional service systems. People experiencing chronic homelessness, who disproportionately include justice-involved individuals, share cultural, linguistic, and experiential common

ground with Urban Alchemy's Practitioners, and this common ground generates the credibility that is foundational to trust-building in hard-to-reach communities.

The three Santa Fe programs work in deliberate sequence. The Oasis functions as a low-threshold entry point, a public park with no eligibility requirements, staffed by Practitioners who greet everyone by name and build consistent daily relationships that become a bridge to deeper engagement. The LOVE outreach team extends this relational model into the streets and encampments, reaching individuals who would not self-present to a service site, and when someone is ready to move indoors, the Agape House provides a low-barrier interim housing environment, accepting any adult regardless of sobriety, criminal history, or identification status, where Care Coordinators support housing navigation, benefits access, and service connection.

Across all three components, program activities lead to outcomes through a clear causal chain:

- Consistent, non-judgmental presence builds trust with individuals who have experienced institutional harm
- Trauma-informed, harm-reduction-oriented engagement reduces barriers to participation without requiring sobriety or compliance as a precondition
- De-escalation and crisis response, including Narcan administration, prevent acute harm and reduce reliance on emergency systems
- Warm handoffs between components, from Oasis to LOVE to Agape House, create a seamless pathway from street contact to housing stability
- Care coordination, benefits enrollment, and housing navigation help participants build the documentation, income, and support networks needed to exit to permanent housing
- Employment of formerly incarcerated and previously unhoused Practitioners generates community safety outcomes and economic inclusion simultaneously

Populations Served

Urban Alchemy's Santa Fe programs serve individuals experiencing unsheltered homelessness, with a particular focus on those facing the greatest barriers to stability, including individuals with substance use disorders, adults with behavioral health challenges, justice-involved individuals often excluded from traditional shelter, individuals with limited English proficiency, Native American individuals, and couples, pet owners, and others ineligible for or unwilling to use congregate shelter. The LOVE outreach demographic data from October 2025 through March 2026 documents 2,236 unduplicated individuals.

LOVE Outreach Contacts by Gender

Gender	Individuals	Share
Men	1,493	66.8%
Women	735	32.9%
Transgender	6	0.3%
Non-binary	2	0.1%

LOVE Outreach Contacts by Race and Ethnicity

Group	Individuals	Share

Hispanic	1,303	58.3%
White	632	28.3%
Native American	121	5.4%
African American	82	3.7%
Unknown or unreported	35	1.6%

This gender profile is consistent with national patterns of unsheltered homelessness, which skew heavily male. The racial and ethnic breakdown reflects Santa Fe's unique demographic context: with Santa Fe County's overall population approximately 50% Hispanic, people of Hispanic background are overrepresented among those experiencing homelessness relative to their general population share, a pattern consistent with the intersection of economic inequality, housing cost burden, and generational poverty in northern New Mexico. The 121 Native American contacts reflect the region's significant Indigenous population, including communities connected to the 19 pueblos and tribal nations of New Mexico.

Evidence and Data

Quantitative Indicators

The following metrics document Urban Alchemy's Santa Fe performance from program inception in October 2025 through March 2026, approximately six months of operation. The LOVE outreach program showed exceptionally high volume:

- 24,280 total outreach contacts in six months, approximately 22.4% of all outreach contacts across Urban Alchemy's seven active regions nationwide, a notably high proportion for a new site
- 2,236 unduplicated individuals contacted
- 1,037 service referrals made, an approximately 33.6% referral rate per contact, compared to 14.6% across all other Urban Alchemy locations combined, indicating higher need and more intensive engagement
- 3,082 non-referral contacts for relationship-building, wellness checks, crisis de-escalation, and space maintenance

Oasis public site visitor counts remained consistent across the winter months:

Month	Unduplicated Visitors
October 2025	517
November 2025	426
December 2025	381
January 2026	379
February 2026	437
March 2026	293
Six-month average	405.5

273 of all Oasis visitors were also Agape House residents, demonstrating integration across program components.

At the national network level, Urban Alchemy has documented over 1.5 million pro-social engagement interactions and responded to more than 40,000 non-emergency calls across cities including San Francisco, Los Angeles, Portland, Birmingham, Denver, and Santa Fe. An independent Stanford Ethnography Lab analysis of San Francisco Police Department crime data at 40 Urban Alchemy-served intersections found a 52% decrease in total crime and an 80% decrease in drug-related crime during the 2022 to 2023 study year.

Impact and Data Maturity

Urban Alchemy's Santa Fe data reflects a program in its early operational phase, with the LOVE outreach program launched in October 2025 and the Agape House and Oasis sites on similarly short data trails. While operational output data such as contact volumes, referral counts, and visitor counts is robust and well-documented, longer-term outcome data, including housing exits, return-to-homelessness rates, and sustained employment, is not yet available for the Santa Fe site.

Data confidence varies by indicator: contact and referral counts and unduplicated visitor counts are high-confidence, documented through the outreach ticketing system and daily site logs; demographic data is moderate-confidence, self-reported at contact with approximately 1.6% unknown race; and service referral outcomes are moderate-to-low confidence, since whether individuals successfully accessed referred services is tracked where known but not systematically confirmed. Housing exits and permanent housing placements are not yet available for Santa Fe, with the national model targeting 40% of interim housing participants exiting to permanent or longer-term housing within 12 months. Santa Fe's overall referral rate of 25.2% across all contacts significantly exceeds the 14.6% rate at all other Urban Alchemy locations combined, suggesting either a higher-acuity population or more intensive engagement, a differential warranting further investigation in the next program year.

Internal Tracking

Urban Alchemy maintains a structured internal data and documentation system across all program components:

- End of Shift Reports completed after every shift, capturing total engagements, referrals, safety incidents, amenity status, supply needs, and success stories
- An outreach ticketing system logging all LOVE contacts with date, type, self-reported demographics, referral status, and disposition, enabling cross-site comparison
- HMIS-compatible case management at the Agape House tracking intake, service plans, housing progress, and exits
- Monthly reporting to the City of Santa Fe within 15 calendar days of month-end, covering visitor counts, engagement types, interventions, overdose events, referrals, staff hours, and incident logs

Santa Fe's internal tracking system is still in its early months, with some consistency gaps expected as protocols are refined for the local context. Urban Alchemy's central Data and Reporting function provides quality assurance and cross-site standardization, though local capacity for deep data analysis remains nascent.

Local Successes

While the Santa Fe programs are too new to demonstrate multi-year trends, several early indicators point to meaningful impact:

- **High and sustained outreach volume:** 24,280 contacts in six months accounting for 22.4% of all contacts across the national network, disproportionate to the program's age and market size
- **Above-average referral rate:** a referral rate exceeding the network average, indicating the team is connecting higher-acuity individuals to services rather than logging superficial contacts
- **Oasis visitor consistency:** an average of 405.5 unduplicated visitors per month despite winter conditions, with a February uptick suggesting growing community trust

- **Cross-program integration:** 273 Oasis visitors who were also Agape House residents, demonstrating the three components functioning as a coordinated continuum
- **Individual success stories:** Agape House participants who secured employment and were promoted, achieved sobriety and applied to become Practitioners, and moved into stable housing before joining the Urban Alchemy team
- **National validation:** the Stanford analysis finding a 52% reduction in total crime and 80% reduction in drug-related crime at served intersections, external evidence that the model produces measurable community safety outcomes when implemented with fidelity

Scalability and Sustainability

Replicability

Urban Alchemy's model is designed for deliberate replication, having scaled from a single San Francisco program in 2018 to over 1,300 staff across six states, with the Santa Fe launch its most recent geographic expansion. Several elements support replicability in a New Mexico context:

- **Documented program models:** detailed Scope of Work documents, policies and procedures manuals, Theory of Change logic models, and staffing templates for each program type standardize design while allowing local adaptation
- **Standardized training curriculum:** all Practitioners complete a minimum 80-hour onboarding and ongoing training covering trauma-informed care, community-based safety, de-escalation, motivational interviewing, harm reduction, and Narcan administration, ensuring model fidelity across sites
- **Lived-experience workforce pipeline:** the Practitioner staffing model can be sourced locally in any community, creating an opportunity to simultaneously reduce recidivism, provide living-wage employment, and deliver high-quality services
- **Scalable three-program continuum:** the Oasis, LOVE, and interim housing model can be deployed in sequence or simultaneously and does not require all three components to generate value

Adaptation for rural and frontier New Mexico would include mobile outreach rather than stationary sites, partnerships with tribal health systems and Indian Health Service for referrals, and attention to linguistic access for Spanish-speaking and Indigenous-language-speaking communities, since the high-desert climate and geographic isolation of many communities differ from Urban Alchemy's primarily urban experience.

Resources and Constraints

Urban Alchemy's illustrative budget templates, which may not reflect Santa Fe-specific contracted amounts, indicate the following annual cost ranges by program type:

Program Component	Estimated Annual Cost
Oasis (day center, 12-hour daily operation)	$710,438, plus $79,000 in start-up costs
LOVE Outreach (street outreach, 16-hour daily operation)	$982,542
Interim Housing (24-hour, 100-bed capacity)	$3,199,272, or $87.65 per guest per day

The program faces several resource constraints:

- **Sanctioned site access:** the Oasis and Agape House require physical sites provided or approved by the municipality, a meaningful dependency in Santa Fe's high-cost real estate environment
- **Workforce recruitment and retention:** finding individuals with lived experience who can pass background clearance, maintain reliable attendance, and thrive in a high-intensity environment is a consistent challenge
- **Permanent housing inventory:** the interim housing model's effectiveness depends on the availability of permanent supportive housing to receive participants ready to exit, and New Mexico's pipeline remains constrained relative to need
- **Multi-year contract stability:** the model requires sustained presence to build community trust, so single-year contracts undermine its relational foundation

Scalability

The Santa Fe program currently operates at a scale calibrated to the contracted scope of one Oasis site, one LOVE outreach team, and one interim housing site, with several feasible expansion vectors: additional Oasis sites in neighborhoods with concentrated unsheltered populations, extended LOVE outreach hours or zones, expansion to other New Mexico municipalities such as Albuquerque, Las Cruces, Taos, and Gallup, and rural and tribal adaptation in partnership with tribal governments, pueblos, or rural county health departments. Scaling has historically been tied to municipal contract revenue, so growth in New Mexico will require either an expanded City of Santa Fe contract or new contracts with other jurisdictions, state agencies, or federal programs, and Urban Alchemy's national track record of responsible growth provides confidence in organizational scalability.

Sustainability

Urban Alchemy's Santa Fe programs are sustained primarily through municipal and state contracts. The organization's funding model nationally relies heavily on government contracts tied to homelessness response systems, providing access to substantial public resources but creating vulnerability to budget cycles and political shifts. Government contract revenue provides predictable, recurring funding when contracts are renewed, and Urban Alchemy's national record of renewals demonstrates the model's ability to maintain funder confidence. Its cost-effectiveness relative to emergency medical services, law enforcement, and incarceration strengthens the case for sustained investment, and the workforce development value of employing formerly incarcerated and previously unhoused individuals creates opportunities for funding from workforce, criminal justice reform, and anti-poverty sources beyond homelessness-specific streams.

Sustainability risks include the evolving state homelessness funding landscape, federal funding fluctuations, changes in state budget priorities, and the relatively short tenure of Urban Alchemy's New Mexico presence. The Office of Housing should consider multi-year contract commitments and inclusion of Urban Alchemy programs in state Continuum of Care planning as sustainability supports.

Equity and Culture

Cultural Humility

Urban Alchemy's approach to cultural humility is structural, not performative. Rather than overlaying cultural sensitivity training onto a conventional service model, the organization builds cultural credibility into the composition of its workforce from the ground up. With over 95% of employees, including leadership, having personal histories of incarceration and/or homelessness, and in Santa Fe where people experiencing homelessness are disproportionately Hispanic and Native American, Practitioners often share not just professional knowledge but biographical experience with the people they serve, understanding from the inside the distrust of institutions and the dynamics of surviving on the street.

Several practices reinforce this orientation:

- **Hiring philosophy:** Urban Alchemy prioritizes individuals with cultural and linguistic ties to the communities served, including bilingual English and Spanish capacity, relevant in a city where Spanish has been spoken continuously for over 400 years
- **Non-judgmental values framework:** the organization's seven core values reject sorting people by perceived worth, and the Oasis open-to-everyone model has housed and unhoused neighbors share the same space and receive the same greeting and dignity
- **Harm reduction as cultural respect:** meeting clients where they are, without judgment or preconditions, recognizes that traditional service models have often imposed behavioral requirements reflecting dominant-culture values rather than the realities of people living with addiction, trauma, or poverty

Demographic and Geographic Adaptability

Santa Fe presents a distinctive set of conditions that shape how the program must adapt. At 7,000 feet elevation, the high-desert climate produces dramatic temperature swings, and the Oasis program adapts by providing substantial heating during cold months, so the site remains a genuine sanctuary during harsh northern New Mexico winters, with climate-appropriate site design specified as a core program requirement rather than an optional amenity. Operating in one of the most culturally distinct Hispanic communities in the United States, shaped by centuries of New Mexican Hispanic culture, the program relies on bilingual Practitioners and Care Coordinators with cultural ties to the community for authentic engagement.

The region's Indigenous context, home to 19 pueblos, three Apache tribes, and the Navajo Nation, means the Native American individuals documented in outreach contacts represent a population that has experienced historical trauma at the hands of federal institutions, making institutional distrust particularly acute; Urban Alchemy's non-punitive, relationship-first model is well-suited to building trust, though genuine cultural competence would require deeper partnership with tribal health programs and Indigenous-led organizations, an area for continued development. As a smaller city of approximately 85,000 residents, Santa Fe offers both advantages, including more intimate community relationships and greater program visibility, and challenges, including fewer resources and greater distances to specialized services, which the program acknowledges by building community guidelines with transparency and open communication.

Program Improvement and Funding

Program Improvements

Urban Alchemy acknowledges that the Santa Fe programs are in their early operational phase and has identified several areas for refinement:

- **Cross-program data integration:** establishing cross-program referral tracking and data-sharing across the Oasis, LOVE, and Agape House systems would document individual pathways from first contact through housing exit
- **Outcome follow-up protocols:** implementing a structured 30, 60, and 90-day follow-up protocol would measure referral effectiveness rather than just referral volume
- **Tribal and Indigenous partnership development:** deeper cultural partnership with Indigenous-led organizations, tribal health programs, and traditional healing practitioners is an opportunity for year two
- **Rural and frontier extension:** exploring a mobile outreach extension of the LOVE program could serve nearby communities such as Espanola, Pojoaque, and surrounding counties with limited services

- **Overdose prevention data:** systematic tracking of overdose responses and reversals would strengthen the program's evidence base for public health impact

Policy and Funding Considerations

Several policy and funding dimensions are relevant for the Office of Housing's consideration:

- **Multi-year contract commitments:** the trust-building at the heart of the model requires sustained presence, so multi-year contract structures with performance-based renewal provisions would strengthen both the relational model and Practitioner retention
- **Continuum of Care inclusion:** formally incorporating the programs into Santa Fe's Continuum of Care planning would allow access to federal Emergency Solutions Grants, CoC, and Supportive Services for Veteran Families funding streams
- **Alternative response framework:** formalizing a dispatch or referral protocol with the Santa Fe Police and Fire Departments would expand the program's reach and potentially generate Medicaid mobile crisis reimbursement
- **Workforce development funding:** the employment of formerly incarcerated individuals is independently fundable through Second Chance Act programs, Department of Workforce Solutions contracts, and federal Reentry Employment Opportunities funding

Technical Assistance

Urban Alchemy Santa Fe has identified several technical assistance needs:

- **Evaluation and outcome measurement:** a structured evaluation partnership to design a Santa Fe-specific outcome framework, establish baseline data, and build toward a quasi-experimental impact assessment
- **HMIS data quality:** assistance on data quality, completeness, and outcome reporting as the Agape House matures its case management, particularly housing exit destinations and 6 and 12-month follow-up
- **Legal and immigration services navigation:** developing relationships with legal aid providers and a warm referral protocol for immigration-related needs the outreach team encounters
- **Tribal partnership facilitation:** the Office of Housing may be well-positioned to facilitate partnerships with tribal health programs, Indian Health Service, and the Eight Northern Indian Pueblos Council

Data Capacity Recommendations

To strengthen the evidentiary foundation of the Santa Fe programs over the next 12 to 24 months, the following investments are recommended:

- **Unified participant tracking:** implement a common unique identifier across the Oasis, LOVE, and Agape House to enable longitudinal tracking without requiring full HMIS enrollment for all contacts
- **Standardized outcome indicators:** adopt the National Alliance to End Homelessness recommended indicators, including housing stability at 6 and 12 months, income change, benefits enrollment, and health coverage, for Agape House participants
- **Safety and systems impact data:** establish a baseline with the City on 911 call volume, ER utilization, and arrest rates in service areas to enable a pre- and post-comparison as the program matures
- **Referral outcome tracking:** expand the LOVE ticketing system to capture referral disposition through a 30-day follow-up protocol

Funding Diversity

Based on available documentation, Urban Alchemy Santa Fe's current funding is primarily derived from the City of Santa Fe municipal services contract covering Oasis and LOVE operations and from State of New Mexico funding through the Office of Housing Homelessness Response Initiative, with potentially additional philanthropic or federal pass-through funding not explicitly documented. Funding diversification opportunities to pursue include:

- HUD Continuum of Care competitive funding for the Agape House interim housing component
- Emergency Solutions Grant funding for outreach and street engagement activities
- SAMHSA Mobile Crisis Response funding for the LOVE team's behavioral health response
- Department of Labor Reentry Employment Opportunities funding for the workforce development dimension of the Practitioner model
- New Mexico behavioral health funding for harm reduction and substance use support
- Private philanthropy from Santa Fe and New Mexico foundations interested in criminal justice reform, housing, and workforce development

Total Program Cost

Exact contracted amounts for the Santa Fe programs are not disclosed in the materials reviewed; the financial data Urban Alchemy provided represents illustrative budget templates rather than actual site-specific figures. Based on those templates, estimated annual operating costs for the Santa Fe portfolio are summarized below.

Program Component	Estimated Annual Cost
Oasis site (Cerrillos Rd, 12-hour operation)	$710,438, plus $79,000 in one-time start-up costs
LOVE outreach program (16-hour operation)	$982,542
Agape House interim housing (100-bed template)	$3,199,272, or $87.65 per guest per day

Agape House's actual capacity and cost are not disclosed and are likely materially lower if the site operates at a smaller scale. Actual Santa Fe program costs should be confirmed with Urban Alchemy and the contracting agency; these figures are estimates from illustrative templates for planning and comparison only.

A derived cost-effectiveness metric is instructive: the LOVE outreach program generated 24,280 contacts in six months, approximately 48,560 annualized, and at an estimated annual cost of $982,542 this represents approximately $20.23 per outreach contact, a figure that compares favorably to the per-contact cost of police response, emergency medical response, or emergency shelter provision for comparable populations.

Future Promising Practices

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Gateway Young Adult

Housing & Treatment Navigation Center

Albuquerque, Bernalillo County, New Mexico

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Operator	Youth Development, Inc. (YDI)

Program Overview

Gateway Young Adult is a 90-day transitional housing program for young adults ages 18–25 experiencing homelessness in Albuquerque. Operated in partnership with Youth Development, Inc. (YDI), it is part of the larger Gateway System of Care run by the City of Albuquerque Department of Health, Housing and Homelessness. The campus serves up to 41 young adults at one time.

The program provides safe, stable housing, daily meals, trauma-informed care, and individualized case management. Services include housing navigation and placement, job readiness and employment connections, financial literacy, life skills training, links to education and training, and behavioral health and treatment navigation. The goal is to move young adults from homelessness to stability and, ultimately, to independent housing.

Rooted in a 2022 Comprehensive Needs Assessment, the program responds to the lack of dedicated transitional housing for young adults in Albuquerque. Young adults are a distinct population and are often not well served by traditional adult shelters. The model combines shelter with structured, individualized services on a single campus to address immediate housing needs and longer-term barriers to independent living.

About the Operator: Youth Development, Inc.

Founded in 1971, YDI is one of New Mexico's largest nonprofits. Today, it operates more than 60 programs, employing over 500 staff across 16 counties. YDI's mission is to walk alongside families as they navigate life's circumstances. Gateway Young Adult is part of YDI's Prevention, Intervention & Behavioral Health Division. This division comprises 21 programs across six counties, spanning crisis intervention, residential housing, behavioral health, and family support.

Population Served

Target Population	Young adults ages 18–25 experiencing homelessness
Geographic Area	Albuquerque, Bernalillo County, New Mexico
Capacity	Up to 41 individuals at one time

Program Length	90-day transitional stay
Program Type	Low-barrier, 24/7 transitional housing with supportive services

Core Service Components

Emergency Housing Operations

- 24/7 staffing, supervision, and guest support
- Safe sleeping accommodations for up to 41 young adults
- Meals, showers, laundry, hygiene supplies, and basic needs support
- Low-barrier model grounded in trauma-informed, harm-reduction principles

Housing Navigation and Case Management

- Intake assessments and Coordinated Entry enrollment within 7 days of intake
- Individualized housing stabilization plans for all residents
- Connections to rapid rehousing, permanent supportive housing, family reunification, and other pathways
- Targeted housing interventions for long-stay residents

Behavioral Health and Treatment Linkages

- Behavioral health and substance use screening at intake
- Referrals to behavioral health providers, outpatient treatment, medical care, and recovery services
- Crisis intervention and supportive counseling coordination
- Warm handoffs to community treatment providers and partner agencies

Education, Employment, and Life Skills

- Connections to GED programs, higher education, workforce training, and employment
- Life skills covering budgeting, communication, tenancy readiness, and self-sufficiency
- Coordination with youth-serving organizations and workforce development partners

Resource Coordination and Community Engagement

- Benefits enrollment support including Medicaid, SNAP, SSI/SSDI, and other resources
- Onsite and partner-led workshops, wellness activities, and resource fairs
- Structured opportunities for resident feedback to inform operations

Staffing

YDI maintains staffing sufficient for comprehensive coverage across all functions, including program oversight and supervision, 24/7 operational coverage, housing navigation and case management, behavioral health coordination, youth engagement and support, and security and facility support.

Operations and Compliance

Practice Model	Trauma-informed, youth-centered, Housing First
Regulatory Standards	Compliance with City and State shelter and program requirements

Data Systems	HMIS and Coordinated Entry System (CES)
Weekly Reporting	Census and demographic data; critical incidents and service utilization
Ongoing Reporting	Length of stay, exits, and housing outcomes; weekly meetings with the City

Budget: FY26

Total Funding	$769,010
Funding Source	State of New Mexico Intergovernmental Agreement
Fiscal Year	FY26

Youth Served

The figures below reflect a weekly census snapshot during the reporting period of May 3–9, 2026.

Reporting Period	May 3–9, 2026
Total Youth Served	28
Age Range	18–25 (all residents)
Female	12
Male	16

Program Outcomes

- Safe temporary housing and stabilization for young adults experiencing homelessness
- Increased exits to permanent housing, family reunification, or supportive programs
- Improved connection to behavioral health and substance use treatment
- Increased engagement in education, employment, and workforce development
- Stronger coordination among youth-serving agencies, behavioral health providers, and housing programs

Recommendations for Future Evaluation

90-Day Program Model

A future evaluation should assess whether the 90-day model is structured to achieve stabilization for young adults ages 18–25. This includes length-of-stay patterns, whether milestones such as Coordinated Entry enrollment within 7 days are consistently met, and how the program responds when residents need longer stays. Findings would inform decisions about program duration and service intensity.

Evidence-Based Practice

Evaluation should examine how trauma-informed, youth-centered, and harm-reduction practices show up in daily operations, including staff training and supervision, consistency across shifts and roles, and how the program adapts evidence-based frameworks to the needs of transition-age young adults.

Housing Outcomes

An evaluation of housing outcomes should assess how effectively the program moves young adults toward sustained safety, stability, and self-sufficiency. This includes the rate and type of exits, including permanent housing, safe family reunification, prevention or stabilization supports, and any returns to homelessness. HMIS and Coordinated Entry data are useful, but the evaluation should also account for pathways outside Coordinated Entry, such as Family Unification Program vouchers, safe family reunification, Family Stabilization resources, and the Albuquerque Guaranteed Basic Income program. The measure is whether the program identifies the most appropriate and sustainable pathway for each young adult.

Community Connections

Evaluation should examine how well the program helps young adults build or keep the relationships and supports needed for long-term stability, including the strength of partnerships with behavioral health providers, workforce organizations, youth-serving agencies, and housing programs, and whether warm handoffs are completed before exit and sustained after. It should also consider each young adult's community of origin. Many come to Albuquerque because resources are unavailable where they live, not because it is their preferred community. Success is best measured by whether the program finds the safest, most supportive, least disruptive path to stability, including a return to a home community when appropriate.

Behavioral Health and Treatment Linkages

Evaluation should examine how intake, screening, and documentation support the identification of behavioral health and substance use needs, whether those practices are clear, consistent, developmentally appropriate, and trauma-informed, and whether referrals are completed, residents engage, and connections affect housing stability and well-being.

Education, Employment, and Life Skills

Evaluation should examine the rate at which residents connect to GED programs, workforce training, employment, and life skills instruction during their stay, the coordination with youth-serving and workforce partners, and whether these connections contribute to self-sufficiency after exit.

Benefits Enrollment and Resource Coordination

Evaluation should assess the program's effectiveness in enrolling residents in mainstream benefits, including Medicaid, SNAP, and SSI/SSDI. Tracking enrollment rates and timeliness would show whether resource coordination meaningfully supports stability during and after the stay.

Taos NEST

Adult Crisis Shelter & One-Stop Resource Center

Taos, Taos County, New Mexico

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Operator	DreamTree Project, Inc.

Program Overview

Taos NEST (Navigating Emergency Support Together) is a low-barrier adult crisis shelter and one-stop daytime resource center for adults experiencing homelessness in Taos. Operated by DreamTree Project, Inc., it serves all adults ages 18 and older, including men, women, and gender-expansive individuals, and admits guests regardless of sobriety. NEST has operated for more than two years and is the first of its kind in rural NM.

The campus pairs an overnight shelter with a daytime resource center where any community member in crisis can reach multiple agencies in one location, including service navigation, Law Enforcement Assisted Diversion (LEAD), harm reduction, housing assistance, and street outreach. Before NEST opened, people seeking help were referred among separate agencies with different hours and eligibility rules. Consolidating these services makes crisis support far more accessible.

An agency-wide workforce practice model combines reflective supervision, the Nurtured Heart Approach, and nonviolent verbal de-escalation. These practices create a trauma-informed environment for guests while reducing secondary trauma for staff, and recent data show minimal incidents of violence despite the low-barrier policy. NEST's Code Blue response to extreme weather has also catalyzed community-wide emergency response, helping Taos prepare for wildfire season and other scenarios.

About the Operator: DreamTree Project, Inc.

Founded in 2000, DreamTree Project is a Taos-based nonprofit providing emergency shelter, transitional housing, street outreach, and supportive services across northern New Mexico, including Colfax, Mora, Rio Arriba, San Miguel, Taos, and Union counties. Its programs include a 24/7 Emergency Youth Shelter for ages 12–17, a Transitional Living Program for ages 16–24, street outreach, and the Enchanted Circle Corps AmeriCorps program. Taos NEST extends this work to adults and families facing housing insecurity.

Population Served

Target Population	Adults ages 18 and older (men, women, gender expansive) experiencing homelessness or housing crisis
Geographic Area	Taos and surrounding rural communities, northern New Mexico

Capacity	Approximately 40–50 individuals per night
Program Length	Emergency and crisis stays; daytime resource center access as needed
Program Type	Low-barrier crisis shelter with co-located, multi-agency supportive services

Core Service Components

Crisis Shelter Operations

- Low-barrier overnight shelter for all adults ages 18 and older
- Admission regardless of sobriety
- Trauma-informed, harm-reduction operating environment
- More than two years of continuous operation; first of its kind in rural New Mexico

One-Stop Daytime Resource Center

- A single location where community members in crisis reach multiple providers
- Consolidates services previously spread across agencies with different hours and eligibility

Service Navigation, Diversion, and Outreach

- Service navigation connecting guests to community resources
- Housing assistance supporting pathways out of homelessness
- Law Enforcement Assisted Diversion (LEAD), harm reduction, and street outreach

Code Blue Emergency Weather Response

- Extended shelter access during extreme weather
- A model for community-wide emergency response and wildfire season preparedness

Agency-Wide Workforce Practice Model

- Reflective supervision: a scheduled, relationship-based process that helps staff examine their emotional responses to the work, well established in early childhood services but uncommon in homeless services
- Nurtured Heart Approach: a behavior transformation framework in which staff recognize and reinforce positive behaviors
- Nonviolent de-escalation: all staff complete Crisis Prevention Institute (CPI) training

Staffing

DreamTree maintains staffing sufficient for comprehensive coverage across all functions, including program oversight and supervision, shelter operations and guest support, service navigation and housing assistance, street outreach and harm reduction, scheduled reflective supervision across all roles and shifts, and CPI nonviolent de-escalation training for all staff.

Operations and Compliance

Practice Model	Trauma-informed, harm reduction, low-barrier; reflective supervision, Nurtured Heart Approach, CPI de-escalation

Data Systems	New Mexico Homeless Management Information System (HMIS)
Incident Reporting	Serious incident data collected by incident type
Emergency Response	Code Blue extreme weather protocol

Adults Served

Reporting Period	To be provided
Nightly Utilization	Approximately 40–50 individuals
Age Range	18 and older (all guests)
Gender	Men, women, and gender-expansive individuals

Program Outcomes

- Safe, accessible crisis shelter for all adults, regardless of sobriety
- Improved access to crisis services through co-location of agencies in one facility
- Shelter safety maintained, evidenced by minimal incidents of violence
- Reduced secondary trauma among staff through reflective supervision and workforce supports
- Stronger community-wide emergency preparedness through the Code Blue model

Recommendations for Future Evaluation

Low-Barrier Shelter Model

Evaluation should assess whether the low-barrier model achieves safety and stabilization for adults in a rural setting. This includes analysis of serious incident data by type, comparison with peer shelters where data exist, and how low-barrier admission affects access for the most vulnerable. Findings would indicate whether the model can be replicated in other rural New Mexico communities.

Evidence-Based Practice

Evaluation should examine how reflective supervision, the Nurtured Heart Approach, and CPI de-escalation operate day to day, including the structure and consistency of reflective supervision across roles and shifts, staff perceptions of support and secondary trauma, retention, and the link between workforce practices and incident rates. Because reflective supervision is rare in homeless services, findings would help determine whether the model transfers across the field.

Co-Located Services Model

Evaluation should assess how much the one-stop center improves access compared with the prior fragmented system, including the number and type of services accessed per visit, the time from first contact to service connection, and guest experience navigating services in a single location.

Housing Outcomes

Evaluation should assess how well NEST moves guests from homelessness toward sustained stability, including the rate and type of exits, connections made through housing assistance and navigation, and returns to homelessness. HMIS data are valuable, but the evaluation should also account for informal housing pathways that operate outside formal systems in a small rural community.

Community Connections and Emergency Response

Evaluation should examine NEST's partnerships with co-located agencies and the Code Blue response and its influence on community-wide preparedness, including coordination with the Town of Taos, emergency management partners, and volunteers. Findings would inform partnership development and rural emergency planning.

Diversion and Harm Reduction

Evaluation should examine the implementation and outcomes of LEAD and harm reduction services, including referral pathways, engagement rates, and effects on criminal-legal involvement, health, and housing stability. Findings would show how effectively these services connect participants to care and reduce future crisis contacts.

Adelante Building Bridges Project

Family Stabilization Initiative

Santa Fe, Santa Fe County, New Mexico

Contact Person	Ivan Cornejo
Title	Program Coordinator
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Address	1300 Camino Sierra Vista, Santa Fe, NM 87505
Operator	Santa Fe Public Schools Adelante Program

Program Overview

The Adelante Building Bridges Project is a family stabilization initiative operated by Santa Fe Public Schools through its Adelante Program, serving families of SFPS students experiencing homelessness under the federal McKinney-Vento Act. It provides individualized family planning, financial education, family development activities, and direct stabilization support across housing, transportation, employment and education, and family essentials. Families qualify by completing financial education, completing a family development activity, and maintaining a 90 percent or higher monthly school attendance rate for their children. The model treats school-based family support as essential to housing stabilization, recognizing how closely educational stability and family housing stability are linked.

Building Bridges addresses a gap in conventional school-based service models by organizing formal resources through relationship, cultural knowledge, lived experience, and sustained community practice. Family Support Specialists draw on local knowledge, bilingual access in English and Spanish, and practice-based judgment to connect families to financial education, counseling, legal support, wellness resources, and material assistance based on each household's priorities, language needs, and immediate barriers.

About the Operator: Santa Fe Public Schools Adelante Program

Founded in 2003, the Adelante Program supports students and families experiencing homelessness or housing instability. It identifies students who meet the McKinney-Vento definition and provides bilingual, culturally responsive support across academic, social service, medical, housing, and basic needs. Adelante serves roughly 1,100 students each year, about 10 percent of district enrollment. In 2024–2025 it identified 1,083 students experiencing homelessness, including 174 unaccompanied homeless youth. Building Bridges operates within Adelante and extends this work through individualized support, with family assistance funds administered by the Partners in Education Foundation as fiscal agent.

Population Served

Target Population	Students and families experiencing homelessness under the McKinney-Vento Act
Geographic Area	Santa Fe, Santa Fe County, New Mexico

Capacity	93 families served to date; up to $9,000 in stabilization support per family
Program Length	2025–2026 school year (pilot; no new families after April 1)
Program Type	School-based family stabilization with individualized planning and direct assistance

Core Service Components

Family Planning and Case Management

- Individualized Building Bridges Family Plan developed with an assigned Family Support Specialist
- Up to five priority support areas identified and ranked by each family
- Three core requirements before resource support: financial education, a family development activity, and 90 percent monthly school attendance for all enrolled children
- Biweekly check-ins, documentation support, and barrier resolution throughout participation

Housing Stability Support

- Rent, mortgage, utilities, security deposits, and moving costs
- Application fees, short-term motel stays, and pet deposits
- Pest control and mold remediation
- Housing navigation, waitlist assistance, and shelter referrals

Transportation Support

- Vehicle repairs, gas cards, and ride service vouchers
- Bus passes for caregivers and driver's license reinstatement
- Car registration and insurance costs

Employment and Education Support

- Job training, certification costs, and work uniforms
- Childcare deposits and tutoring
- Technology for school or work
- Vital document replacement and immigration or court filing fees

Family Essentials and Well-Being

- Clothing, food and grocery support, and hygiene items
- Diapers, formula, and safe storage items
- Home furnishings and household items
- Family connection, safety, and well-being supports

Staffing

Adelante maintains staffing sufficient to deliver Building Bridges alongside its broader McKinney-Vento work, including program and co-coordination, Family Support Specialists conducting planning and case management, dedicated liaisons providing direct student and family support, case management including an early childhood

case manager, grant writing and warehouse and resource coordination, and coordination with approved community providers.

Operations and Compliance

Practice Model	Family-centered, relationship-based, culturally responsive, bilingual (English and Spanish)
Eligibility Standards	McKinney-Vento eligibility; 90 percent monthly school attendance; completion of financial education and family development
Data Systems	Adelante database and Building Bridges Tracker
Documentation	Family Plan Workbook; Release of Liability Waiver; Release of Information; Family Agreement
Ongoing Reporting	Biweekly check-ins; closeout forms; family survey; assists and expenditures tracked by priority area

Budget: 2025–2026

Total Funding	$1,400,000
Funding Source	Adelante Building Bridges allocation; family assistance funds administered via Partners in Education (PIE)
Fiscal Year	2025–2026

Program Outcomes

- Increased housing stability for families experiencing homelessness
- Sustained school attendance at or above 90 percent for enrolled children
- Stronger family financial capability through financial education
- Improved family functioning through family development activities
- Reduced material hardship through direct stabilization assistance
- Stronger coordination among schools, families, and community providers

Recommendations for Future Evaluation

Family Stabilization Model

Evaluation should assess whether the structured model, with individualized planning, core completion requirements, and a capped award, is designed to achieve stabilization for participating families. This includes completion rates for the three core requirements, how priority areas are ranked and sequenced, and how the program responds when families face barriers. Findings would inform program design and award structure.

Family-Centered Practice and Professional Judgment

Evaluation should examine how Family Support Specialists identify priorities, build trust, and exercise practice-based judgment, including how they assess immediate needs, activate trusted relationships, and adapt assistance as circumstances change, and how these relational practices contribute to stability.

Housing Stability Outcomes

Evaluation should track the rate and type of housing assists and whether families move toward and sustain stable housing. Housing has been the largest area of assistance to date, so findings would show whether the program is achieving its core goal of durable housing stability.

Educational Outcomes and School Attendance

Because resource support is conditioned on 90 percent monthly attendance, evaluation should examine the connection between household stabilization and student presence in school, tracking attendance, tardiness, behavioral incidents, and engagement to build credible, data-supported evidence of impact.

Bilingual Accessibility and Cultural Responsiveness

Evaluation should assess how bilingual delivery and culturally responsive practice shape trust, communication, and follow-through, including whether language access and cultural knowledge strengthen the conditions the model depends on dignity, shared understanding, and families' ability to name their own needs.

Community Partnerships

Evaluation should examine the approved provider network delivering financial education, family counseling, and parenting support, including service format, scheduling, and accessibility, and whether referrals result in sustained family engagement.

Family Feedback and Confidence

Evaluation should build on early survey results, in which families strongly agreed the program was helpful and would recommend it to others. Tracking family-reported confidence, satisfaction, and perceived progress over time would show whether the model meets family needs as it scales.

Promotoras

Community Health Leadership & Education Program

Albuquerque, Bernalillo County, New Mexico

Contact Person	Ana Lopez
Title	Promotora Program Manager
Phone	505-246-8972 ext. 27
Email	alopez@enlacenm.org
Mailing Address	P.O. Box 8919, Albuquerque, NM 87198
Operator	Enlace Comunitario

Program Overview

Promotoras is a community health leadership and education initiative operated by Enlace Comunitario in Central New Mexico. Former clients, survivors of domestic violence, are trained as community health leaders and educators known as Promotoras. After intensive leadership training, they serve as community liaisons and health advocates who raise awareness about domestic violence and gender inequity through culturally and linguistically appropriate presentations.

Promotoras deliver education on domestic violence, its impact on children, gender equity, self-esteem, and gendered roles. Drawing on their own lived experience and shared language and culture, they extend Enlace's reach into high-need communities and act as accessible, trusted advocates for the Latine immigrant community.

The model rests on the recognition that survivors are uniquely positioned to reach and support others. Rather than relying only on professional staff, it builds community capacity from within, pairing peer leadership with prevention education to address the root causes of intimate partner violence and gender inequity.

About the Operator: Enlace Comunitario

Founded in 2000, Enlace Comunitario is a social justice organization working to decrease gender inequity and intimate partner violence in the Latine immigrant community in Central New Mexico. It emerged in response to community need following a survivor's death during a domestic violence incident and has focused on services for Spanish-speaking immigrants and their families. Enlace provides direct services to more than 650 families a year and reaches many more through outreach and leadership development. It is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit, and the Promotoras program sits within its Outreach & Education work alongside Youth Leaders, Voces Unidas, and Prevention Classes.

Population Served

Target Population	Latine immigrant survivors trained as community health leaders, and the broader Latine immigrant community reached through education and outreach
Geographic Area	Central New Mexico, including the Albuquerque metropolitan area

Program Type	Peer leadership development and community-based prevention education
Language	Bilingual; services delivered in Spanish and English
Program Length	Ongoing; Promotoras complete intensive training and continue as educators and advocates

Core Service Components

Promotora Leadership Training & Development

- Intensive leadership training for former clients and survivors of domestic violence
- Preparation to serve as community liaisons and health advocates
- Development of presentation and facilitation skills
- Ongoing support and engagement within Enlace's Outreach & Education work

Community Education & Awareness

- Culturally and linguistically appropriate community presentations
- Education on domestic violence and its impact on children
- Education on gender equity, self-esteem, and gendered roles
- Outreach that extends Enlace's reach into high-need communities

Promotoras de Desarrollo Infantil (PDI)

- Training to screen young children for socio-emotional developmental delays
- Use of a social determinants of health screen with parents to identify household needs
- Connection of families to appropriate resources based on screening
- Support for child development milestones while improving household wellbeing

Community Liaison & Advocacy

- Service as accessible, trusted advocates within the Latine immigrant community
- Connection of community members to Enlace services and broader resources
- Promotion of healthy relationships and prevention of intimate partner violence

Staffing

The program is led by a Promotora Program Manager and staffed by trained Promotoras serving as community health leaders and educators, supported by Enlace's broader team across direct services and outreach, which together serve more than 650 families a year. Specific staffing levels for the program are not publicly specified.

Operations and Compliance

Practice Model	Peer-led, culturally and linguistically appropriate, trauma-informed, gender-equity and prevention focused
Organizational Status	501(c)(3) nonprofit organization

Service Hours	Monday–Friday, 8:00 a.m.–5:00 p.m. (Fridays by phone/Zoom); closed weekends and holidays
Data Systems	Not publicly specified
Reporting	Not publicly specified

Budget

Specific budget figures for the Promotoras program are not publicly specified. As a program of Enlace Comunitario, it is supported through the organization's overall funding, which combines grants, foundation support, and individual donations. Enlace is a 501(c)(3) organization, and information about its funders and financials is published on its website.

Program Outcomes

- Increased community awareness of domestic violence, gender inequity, and their impact on families and children
- Stronger leadership, advocacy, and facilitation skills among Promotoras
- Expanded reach of prevention education into high-need Latine immigrant communities
- Improved identification of socio-emotional developmental delays through PDI screening
- Increased connection of families to resources that address household needs and social determinants of health
- Reduced likelihood of domestic violence and improved household health and wellbeing

Recommendations for Future Evaluation

Leadership Training Model

Evaluation should assess whether the leadership training model prepares survivors to serve effectively as community health leaders and educators, including the content and intensity of training, the supports available over time, and how the program sustains engagement and prevents burnout among peer leaders.

Community Education Reach and Effectiveness

Evaluation should examine the reach and effectiveness of Promotora-led presentations, including the number of community members reached, the topics most relevant to participants, and changes in awareness or attitudes about domestic violence and gender equity. Findings would inform presentation content, frequency, and target communities.

Culturally and Linguistically Appropriate Practice

Evaluation should examine how culturally, and linguistically appropriate practices are implemented and how effectively the peer model uses shared language, culture, and lived experience to build trust, including whether the approach reaches community members underserved by traditional service models.

Promotoras de Desarrollo Infantil (PDI) Screening

Because PDI involves developmental screening of young children and social determinants of health screening with parents, evaluation should assess how consistently screenings are completed, the rate at which identified needs lead to resource connections, and whether those connections result in meaningful follow-through.

Resource Connection and Follow-Through

Evaluation should examine the depth of the program's connections to community resources and Enlace's direct services, including whether referrals are completed, whether families maintain connections over time, and how the program coordinates with case management, legal, housing, and counseling services.

Prevention and Long-Term Impact

Evaluation should examine whether Promotora-led education and advocacy produce measurable shifts in community attitudes, promote healthy relationships, and prevent intimate partner violence. Findings would inform prevention strategy across Enlace's Outreach & Education programs and its broader mission to decrease gender inequity and domestic violence.

Adobe Construction Course

Preserving Heritage — Vocational Earthen Building Program

Las Vegas, San Miguel County, New Mexico

Course Contact	Jake Barrow, Cornerstones Community Partnerships
Phone	(505) 231-5408
Email	JBarrow@cstones.org
Enrollment Contact	Karen Wezwick, Luna Community College
Enrollment Phone	(505) 454-5308 ext. 1207
Enrollment Email	kwezwick@luna.edu
Course Location	Luna Community College, Las Vegas, NM
Operator	Cornerstones Community Partnerships, 227 Otero Street, Santa Fe, NM 87501
Program Page	https://www.cstones.org/new-page-28
Course & Enrollment Info	https://sites.google.com/luna.edu/adobe-construction/home

Program Overview

Preserving Heritage: Adobe Construction is a hands-on vocational course offered at Luna Community College in Las Vegas, New Mexico, through a partnership between the college and Cornerstones Community Partnerships, a Santa Fe-based historic-preservation nonprofit. Across a series of Friday and Saturday modules, students learn traditional earthen building skills, including adobe mud mixing, brick laying, and traditional finishing methods, while collectively constructing a 750-square-foot home on the college campus.

The course is built around a live demonstration project: a fire-resistant adobe home designed for both passive and active solar performance, including photovoltaic panels. Students do not practice on mock-ups; they build a real, code-relevant structure from the ground up, and receive free construction documents that include documentation of the build itself. The course pairs technical skill-building with an explicit emphasis on the environmental advantages of earthen construction and the preservation of New Mexico's architectural and cultural heritage.

The inaugural cohort began in September 2024 and ran across four sections through June 2025, with several scheduled breaks; following one such break, classes resumed on April 4, 2025. Instruction takes place every Friday and Saturday, with enrollment capped at 20 students. The model addresses a regional need to keep traditional building knowledge alive and to build local workforce capacity in rural northern New Mexico, where adobe remains both a cultural touchstone and a practical, low-impact building material.

About the Operator: Cornerstones Community Partnerships

Founded in 1986, originally as "Churches: Symbols of Community" under the New Mexico Community Foundation, and incorporated as an independent nonprofit in 1994, Cornerstones Community Partnerships works

in partnership with communities to restore historic structures, preserve cultural landscapes, encourage traditional building practices, and conserve natural resources. The organization has provided assistance at more than 380 architectural treasures and historic sites, working primarily on publicly owned or publicly used structures.

Cornerstones' approach is deliberately hands-on and community-led: it acts as a technical consultant while communities retain leadership of their own projects, and it embeds a youth- and adult-training component wherever possible to pass traditional skills between generations. The Adobe Construction Course at Luna Community College is a direct extension of this mission, moving the organization's preservation expertise into a structured, certificate-bearing educational setting.

Who the Course Serves

Target Population	Adult learners seeking hands-on training in traditional adobe construction (open enrollment)
Geographic Focus	Las Vegas, San Miguel County and surrounding rural northern New Mexico
Cohort Capacity	Up to 20 students per cohort
Program Length	Four-module course; meets Fridays and Saturdays
Program Type	Hands-on vocational and heritage-preservation training with a live build component

Core Course Components

Hands-On Earthen Construction Skills

- Adobe mud mixing and adobe brick production
- Brick laying and wall construction
- Traditional finishing methods, including earthen and lime-based plasters
- Hands-on participation in building a full 750-square-foot structure

Sustainable & Energy-Efficient Design

- Passive and active solar design principles applied to the demonstration home
- Use of photovoltaic panels and the natural insulating properties of adobe
- Fire-resistant design and construction techniques
- Use of locally sourced, low-impact building materials

Heritage Preservation & Documentation

- Instruction grounded in New Mexico's architectural traditions and cultural heritage
- Transmission of traditional building techniques passed down through generations
- Free construction documents, including documentation of the house being built

Certification & Credentialing

- Certificate of completion awarded to students who finish the full course
- Demonstrable, portfolio-ready experience on a real, completed build

Course Structure & Schedule

Format	In-person and hands-on; classes held every Friday and Saturday
Structure	Four modules (sections) comprising the full course
Inaugural Run	September 2024 – June 2025
Current Cycle	Classes resumed April 4, 2025, following a scheduled break
Live Build	750 sq ft fire-resistant, passive/active solar adobe home on the Luna campus

Tuition & Enrollment

Full Course	$3,200
Per Module	$800
Regional Discount	25% off for San Miguel, Mora, Guadalupe, and Colfax County students
Certification Requirement	Full-course completion required to qualify for certification
Cohort Size	Enrollment limited to 20 students
Required Gear	Steel-toed boots, hard hat, work gloves, long pants, work shirts, sunscreen, dust masks, goggles; notebook and pen

Funding & Sponsors

Financial Model	Tuition-based ($3,200 full course / $800 per module), supplemented by foundation and corporate sponsorship
Published Program Budget	Not publicly specified
Program Sponsors	Franken Construction; Las Vegas Community Foundation; Luna Community College; McCune Foundation; NM Rural Development Corporation; NM Workforce Solutions; Remy's Good Day Fund; Santa Fe Community Foundation; Southwest Capital Bank; Thornburg Investments

Intended Outcomes

The course is structured to produce the following outcomes through its modules and live build:

- Practical, demonstrable competency in traditional adobe construction techniques
- Completion of a real, fire-resistant solar adobe home usable as a teaching and demonstration asset

- A certificate of completion that supports workforce entry and preservation-related employment
- Strengthened local capacity to maintain and build with adobe in rural northern New Mexico
- Preservation and intergenerational transmission of traditional building knowledge
- Free construction documentation that enables others to replicate the build

Recommendations for Future Evaluation

Course Model & Completion

A future evaluation should assess whether the four-module structure is appropriately designed to carry students through to certification. Because certification requires completing the full course, and because students may enroll module-by-module at $800 each, evaluation should examine enrollment-to-completion rates, where in the sequence students drop off, and whether the per-module pricing option helps or hinders full completion. Findings would inform decisions about module design, pacing, and pricing.

Skills Acquisition & Certification

Evaluation should examine how effectively the course builds durable, demonstrable competency in adobe mud mixing, brick laying, and traditional finishing. This includes how skills are assessed whether the certificate reflects a consistent standard of competency across cohorts and instructors, and whether graduates can independently apply these techniques after the course ends.

Workforce & Economic Outcomes

Given the involvement of NM Workforce Solutions and the targeted tuition discounts for local counties, a future evaluation should track what students do after completion: entry into construction or preservation trades, apprenticeships, self-employment, or further training. This measure would show whether the certificate translates into real economic opportunity, particularly for residents of San Miguel, Mora, Guadalupe, and Colfax counties, where rural employment options can be limited.

Access & Equity

Evaluation should consider whether the course's cost, location, schedule, and gear requirements create barriers for the communities it most aims to serve. The 25% regional discount signals an intent to prioritize local and rural learners; evaluation should assess whether that discount, along with the weekend schedule and any available scholarships or sponsor support, is sufficient to make the course genuinely accessible to lower-income and place-bound students rather than only to those who can absorb the full $3,200 cost and the required equipment.

Heritage Preservation & Community Capacity

Consistent with Cornerstones' mission, evaluation should examine whether the course succeeds at its deeper goal: keeping traditional building knowledge alive within the communities where adobe is part of the living landscape. Success should not be measured only by the completion of a single demonstration home on a college campus. A strong program builds lasting capacity: graduates who maintain historic adobe structures in their own villages, who teach others, and who carry these techniques forward. Evaluation should assess whether the course is seeding that distributed, community-rooted capacity, and whether the free construction documents are actually reaching and being used by others.

Demonstration Home & Replicability

Future evaluation should assess the value of the completed home as a long-term teaching and demonstration asset, including how it is used after construction, whether its fire-resistant and solar features perform as designed, and

whether the documentation package enables replication of the model elsewhere in the region. Findings would inform whether the build model is a one-time training vehicle or a scalable template for affordable, low-impact housing. Because the course originated in the community's response to the loss of homes during the Hermits Peak and Calf Canyon fires, evaluation should also consider the model's relevance to culturally appropriate housing for displaced and housing-insecure residents. Adobe offers a locally rooted, lower-cost alternative to standard emergency and replacement housing, and evaluation should examine whether the demonstration home and its documentation can inform housing responses that reflect the region's cultural traditions rather than displace them.

Partnership & Funding Sustainability

Because the course depends on a partnership between Cornerstones and Luna Community College and on a coalition of foundation and corporate sponsors, evaluation should examine the durability of that funding base and the clarity of roles between partners. Findings would inform whether the course can sustain consistent annual cohorts, and what diversified or recurring funding would be needed to secure it beyond year-to-year sponsorship.

The Semilla Project

A Center for Transformation for Rising Community Leaders

Albuquerque, Bernalillo County, New Mexico

Organization	The Semilla Project
Executive Director	Elizabeth Cuna
Location	Albuquerque, New Mexico, with organizing statewide
Website	https://semillaproject.org/
Inquiries	Via the website contact form at semillaproject.org/#contact; no public phone number or email is listed on the site
Social Media	Facebook, Instagram, and TikTok @thesemillaproject; X @semilla_project
Related Initiative	NextGen New Mexico at nextgen-nm.org

Organizational Overview

The Semilla Project is a New Mexico-based nonprofit that describes itself as a center of change and transformation focused on leadership development and capacity building, led by Black, Indigenous, and Women of Color for the youth of Black, Indigenous, and People of Color communities. Its work blends identity, culture, wellness, and land-based learning, organizing intergenerationally with diverse communities across the state. “Semilla” is the Spanish word for “seed,” reflecting the organization’s framing of leadership as something cultivated and grown within communities.

Mission

To organize intergenerationally with diverse communities through a culturally affirming, land-based learning approach, advancing economic and cultural prosperity through leadership development, advocacy and policy work, and narrative change.

Vision

To nurture the next generation of thought and community leaders by building a home for people’s authentic selves, grounded in ancestral knowledge and lived experience, and transforming these gifts into tools and skills that allow communities to grow, thrive, and sustain themselves.

About the Organization

The Semilla Project uses the outdoors and land-based education as a gateway to leadership, civic engagement, and policy change, working to ensure that historically underserved communities, especially Black, Indigenous, and other youth of color, gain access to outdoor spaces, conservation education, and career pathways tied to land stewardship. The organization has been a recipient of New Mexico’s Outdoor Equity Fund since 2021, which it credits with allowing it to expand programming and invest in infrastructure such as transportation and equipment. According to the New Mexico Outdoor Recreation Division, the organization reports engaging roughly 1,000

young people since 2022, reaching an estimated 200 to 300 participants per year through school partnerships, community outreach, and grassroots engagement.

Who the Organization Serves

Target Population	Youth and community members from Black, Indigenous, and People of Color communities, with a focus on Black, Indigenous, and Women of Color, engaged through an intergenerational approach
Geographic Focus	New Mexico; Albuquerque-based with organizing statewide, including a community organizer in Las Cruces
Approach	Culturally affirming, land-based, intergenerational leadership development
Reported Reach	Approximately 200 to 300 youth per year, and about 1,000 since 2022, according to Outdoor Equity Fund reporting
Organization Type	Nonprofit organization

Organizational Pillars

The Semilla Project organizes its work around five pillars:

Strengthening Our Movement's Frontline

Fuels issue campaigns, governance efforts, and the education of policymakers and educators to ensure that victories are implemented well, fostering accountable representation and civic participation so that community voices are amplified.

Cultivating and Transforming Leaders

Empowers individuals to challenge systems and become agents of change through mentorship and companionship, using scalable training to build networking and collaboration and to cultivate leaders who are effective and resilient.

Deepening Indigeneity with Land-Based Learning

Uses land-based curricula and outdoor programs to build self-identity and wellness as a foundation for civic action, conservation work, and environmental stewardship, with youth developing technical, personal, and interpersonal skills while camping, hiking, and climbing.

Revolutionizing Economic Development Models

Provides diverse communities with avenues into outdoor industries by training and incentivizing youth as outdoor guides, instructors, and educators, and supports scalable conservation and natural-resource initiatives that elevate local communities' regenerative economies.

Transforming Media Narratives and Building Power

Shifts media narratives by amplifying new voices within the community, celebrating connection to the land as cultural heritage, and expanding the organization's reach in community narratives both online and offline.

Programs

SemiYA! (Youth Activation)	Outdoors, land-based learning, and wellness with healing and grounding practices and a curriculum connecting participants to identity, culture, and each other. Includes no-cost climbing days, three-day backpacking trips, and three- and ten-day outdoor intensives.
Cosecha Forward	A mentorship program connecting a wide network of professionals with youth through one-on-one and small-group educational mentorships, in which youth are empowered as both learners and leaders and help shape programming decisions on their own behalf.
The Return	An excursion to Citlaltépetl in Mexico, described as the highest volcanic summit in North America, including mountaineering leadership training and climate-change impact education led by descendants of the original inhabitants of Mexico and New Mexico.
Youth Power!	A program educating youth in advocacy and movement building on issues directly impacting their communities, public lands, nature, and wellbeing.
Re/Generation	A cross-racial coalition of six organizations that prepares youth leaders to tackle justice issues in their own regions, shifting the public narrative to center Black, Indigenous, and People of Color communities and advancing a movement toward a sustainable and just economy.

Advocacy & Policy Focus

Alongside its youth programming, The Semilla Project engages in advocacy and policy work in the following areas:

- Clean energy: advocacy in support of clean energy policy in New Mexico.
- Outdoor Equity Fund: support for and advocacy around New Mexico's Outdoor Equity Fund, including a campaign for $3.5 million in state funding in fiscal year 2027. The organization has also been an Outdoor Equity Fund grantee since 2021.
- Narrative and movement building: shifting public narratives to center Black, Indigenous, and People of Color communities and their connection to land.

Leadership & Team

The organization's current leadership and staff, as listed on its website, include:

Elizabeth Cuna	Executive Director
Aline Castelan Gonzalez	Special Projects
Jared Berenice Estrada	Political & Economic Development Director
Emmet T. Yepa	Government Affairs Coordinator
Erendira Navarro Díaz	Finance & Operations Consultant

Keegan Allen Rose	Outdoors Programs Manager
Janeth Antillon	Field Manager
Carolina Carillo	State Community Organizer
Deborah Lynn Ortega	Las Cruces Community Organizer
Aaron Lee	Land and Food Sovereignty Manager
Victoria Martine	Farm, Community Garden, & Urban Forestry Program Coordinator / Co-Manager
Manuel Lujan	Food Systems Innovation & Production Coordinator
Alexis Escobar	Video Content Creator
Daibelys Gil	Office Assistance & Logistics Intern
Alexis Gomez	Urban Forestry & Outdoor Educator Intern
Jesus Alexis Arguello	Urban Forestry & Agriculture Intern

Sponsors & Funding

Sponsors & Donors	Albuquerque Community Foundation; CDC Foundation; City of Albuquerque Equity; Clean Water For All; Climate Reality Project; Con Alma Health Foundation; Emergent Fund; Energy Foundation; Ford Foundation; Grove Foundation; Hispanics in Philanthropy; McCune Charitable Foundation; 11th Hour; Tides Foundation; New Mexico Outdoor Equity Fund.
Program Partners	The organization also displays a number of program partner organizations on its website.
Financial Model	Supported through foundation grants, government and municipal support, and individual donations; the specific annual budget is not publicly stated on the website.
Organization Type	Nonprofit organization

Recommendations: Potential as an Asset for Homelessness Prevention, Services, and Healing

The Semilla Project is not a homelessness services organization, and these recommendations do not assume it should become one. Rather, several of its core strengths could position it as a meaningful asset within a broader system of homelessness prevention, service provision, and healing. The following recommendations identify where those strengths align and what a future evaluation or partnership exploration should examine.

Land-Based Healing and Trauma Recovery

The organization's emphasis on land-based learning, wellness, and grounding practices could serve as a healing asset for people experiencing or recovering from homelessness, who often carry significant trauma. Nature-based

and culturally rooted healing can complement clinical and case-management services by supporting emotional regulation, connection, and a sense of dignity. A future evaluation should assess whether the organization's outdoor and wellness programming could be adapted for adults and families in housing crisis, and whether its trauma-sensitive, culturally affirming methods translate well to this population.

Economic Pathways as Homelessness Prevention

Because stable income is one of the strongest protections against losing housing, the organization's work training and incentivizing youth as outdoor guides, instructors, and educators could function as a prevention strategy. This is especially relevant for young people at elevated risk of homelessness, including those aging out of foster or immigration-related systems and youth from low-income immigrant families. Evaluation should examine whether these workforce pathways produce durable employment and income, and whether they could be intentionally targeted toward housing-insecure youth as an upstream prevention measure.

Food and Land Sovereignty as Basic-Needs Provision

The organization's food and land sovereignty work, including community gardens, urban forestry, and food systems programming, addresses a basic need central to both prevention and direct service provision. Access to fresh, free produce can ease the financial strain on households on the edge of housing loss and can supplement food provision for people who are already unhoused. Evaluation should consider how this programming could connect to shelters, transitional housing, and food-access networks, and whether it could be scaled to reach housing-insecure residents directly.

Community, Belonging, and Mentorship Against Isolation

Social isolation is both a risk factor for and a consequence of homelessness. The organization's intergenerational, mentorship-based model, and its stated aim of building a home for people's authentic selves, could help counter that isolation by creating belonging, trusted relationships, and peer support. Evaluation should assess whether the organization's mentorship and community-building practices could be extended to people experiencing housing instability, helping to rebuild the social networks that support recovery and lasting stability.

Culturally Rooted Services for Overrepresented Communities

Black, Indigenous, People of Color, and immigrant communities are overrepresented among people experiencing homelessness and are frequently underserved by mainstream systems. The organization's culturally affirming, community-led approach could make prevention and healing services more trusted and accessible for these communities. Evaluation should examine whether the organization's cultural grounding and existing relationships position it to reach people who fall through the gaps of conventional services, and whether it could act as a trusted bridge connecting them to housing and support resources.

Advocacy, Narrative Change, and Housing Policy

The organization's advocacy and narrative-change capacity could be directed toward housing and homelessness, an area where affected communities are often spoken about rather than centered. Evaluation should consider whether the organization's experience shifting public narratives and mobilizing civic participation could support housing-stability policy, more dignified narratives about people experiencing homelessness, and the leadership of directly affected people in shaping solutions.

Partnership and Complementary Role

Because the organization is not a homelessness services provider, its greatest value may lie in complementing existing providers rather than duplicating their work. Evaluation should clarify where the organization's strengths

in healing, prevention, workforce development, and food access fit within the local continuum of care, what partnerships with shelters, housing programs, and outreach teams would be required, and what additional capacity or funding the organization would need to take on such a role responsibly.

Protecting Our Ancestral Seeds

Indigenous Seed Sovereignty & Community Seed Bank

Pueblo of Acoma, Cibola County, New Mexico

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Address	Pueblo of Acoma, New Mexico
Operator	Ancestral Lands Conservation Corps: Acoma Office

Program Overview

The Pueblo of Acoma's Protecting Our Ancestral Seeds program is a community-rooted initiative that treats seeds as living relatives and essential cultural heritage. Grounded in the Ancestral Lands Conservation Corps (ALCC) Acoma Farm Corps Program, this work focuses on rematriating, growing, and sharing indigenous seeds such as Acoma blue corn and Hopi yellow beans to ensure agricultural sovereignty, drought tolerance and the continuity of traditional farming practices across generations.

In a time of climate chaos, the program draws on deep ancestral knowledge to cultivate arid-adapted varieties uniquely suited to the soils, waters, and conditions of the Southwest. Since the Community Seed Bank's establishment in 2012, Acoma Farm Corps youth participants and ALCC staff have steward over a hundred distinct varieties propagating, harvesting, labeling, and storing seeds each season and distributing them freely to Acoma Pueblo farmers, gardeners, and aligned intertribal communities.

About the Operator: Ancestral Lands Conservation Corps — Acoma

Ancestral Lands Conservation Corps (ALCC) is a conservation and community organization with deep roots in the Pueblo of Acoma. Founded on the principle that land stewardship and cultural continuity are inseparable, ALCC runs conservation crews, youth programs, and food systems initiatives across the Acoma region. The Acoma Farm Corps, established in 2011, is ALCC's flagship agricultural training program. It places youth in immersive, stipend-supported growing seasons that cover every stage of cultivation from soil conservation and seed saving to traditional food preparation while also maintaining the Acoma Community Seed Bank and leading regional seed rematriation efforts.

Population Served

Primary Population	Acoma Pueblo community farmers, gardeners, and youth participants

Secondary Population	Southwest intertribal communities; national and international Indigenous growers (by availability)
Geographic Area	Pueblo of Acoma, Cibola County, New Mexico; regional Southwest
Program Type	Youth conservation corps, community seed bank, and seed rematriation initiative
Seed Distribution	Free to Acoma community; prioritized by Acoma Tribal membership, then intertribal, then broader communities of color

Core Program Areas

Seed Rematriation

- Work to retrieve and return displaced native seeds to their ancestral lands, waters, and caretakers

Community Seed Bank

- Established in 2011, by Acoma Farm Corps youth and ALCC staff,
- Seed propagation

Intergenerational Knowledge & Farm Corps Training

- Participants receive a living stipend, engagement in every stage of cultivation: soil conservation and regeneration, seed saving technique, flood irrigation and traditional water harvesting.

Tribal Co-stewardship

- The Pueblo of Acoma has established collaborative co-stewardship agreements with entities including the Bureau of Land Management. These formal agreements ensure that Acoma's voice and authority are embedded in decisions affecting lands

Program Staff

Aaron Lowden, Food Systems Program Manager — Aaron began his career in 2010 with the National Park Service before joining Ancestral Lands, where he recruited and mentored crews for a decade and established the Acoma Farm Corps and Seed Bank in 2012. After serving as Indigenous Seed Keepers Network Program Coordinator with Native American Food Sovereignty Alliance, he rejoined ALCC in 2024 to lead food systems work and support emerging Farm Corps programs at Zuni and Isleta Pueblos.

Domonique Lowden, Acoma Farm Coordinator — Domonique joined Ancestral Lands in 2010 as a crew member and has since served as crew leader and historic preservation crew lead on National Park Service sites. As Farm Coordinator, she manages and mentors two Farm Technicians and a five-person Farm Crew stewarding the two-acre field and a 30×96 ft Senior Center Hoop House. She co-manages the Acoma Community Seed Bank and leads all community seed requests and disbursements.

Zada Miller, Acoma Ancestral Lands Program Coordinator — Zada joined Ancestral Lands in 2012 as a crew member and has served as assistant crew leader, crew leader, and field supervisor. Since 2022, she has served as Program Coordinator for the Acoma office, managing and mentoring all staff and crews. Outside of work, Zada is engaged in cattle ranching, agriculture, and art.

Seed Distribution Guidelines

The Community Seed Bank distributes seeds freely, guided by the following priority order based on equity, cultural connection, and the principle that seeds belong to the communities that developed them:

- First priority: Acoma Pueblo Tribal members (some varieties exclusively reserved)
- Second priority: Southwest intertribal communities, especially those whose seeds are held in the bank
- Third priority: National and international Indigenous/intertribal communities
- Fourth priority: Communities of color, in recognition of historical inequities in food and seed access

Seeds are not sold. Growers receiving seeds are asked to grow, save, and share them with other community members, sustaining the living network of seed stewardship.

Operations & Seed Stewardship

Seed Standards	Non-GMO; grown on Acoma land with Acoma waters; no pesticides, herbicides, or chemical fertilizers
Distribution	Free to community; seed request form required (name, phone, tribe, mailing address)
Grow-Out Planning	4-year strategic grow-out plan to prevent seed viability loss
Tracking & Inventory	Annual propagation, harvest, processing, labeling, inventory, and storage of all varieties
Seed Policy	Non-commercial community use only; recipients asked to save and share seed

Program Outcomes

- Increased agricultural sovereignty through community control of arid-adapted landrace seed varieties
- Hundreds of seed requests fulfilled annually; over one hundred varieties stewarded in the Community Seed Bank
- Successful rematriation of displaced Acoma seeds, including Acoma Red on Red Beans, Acoma Red on White Beans, and Acoma Rust Colored Corn
- Youth participants trained in traditional farming, flood irrigation, soil conservation, and seed saving through stipend-supported immersive seasons
- Strengthened intertribal relationships and regional food sovereignty networks
- Co-stewardship agreements with federal agencies protecting Acoma's cultural and agricultural interests on ancestral lands

Funding Partners & Supporters

- Colorado Plateau Foundation

- W.K. Kellogg Foundation
- New Mexico Foundation
- Chamiza Foundation
- McCune Charitable Foundation
- Native American Relief Fund Zone Grant
- Schmidt Family Foundation and 11th Hour Fund
- Jon and Kathleen Altman Foundation
- Department of the Interior and Bureau of Indian Affairs Indian Youth Service Corps
- New Mexico Youth Conservation Corps
- Remy's Good Day Fund

Recommendations: Potential as an Asset for Homelessness Prevention, Services, and Healing

This program is rooted in seed sovereignty and food systems, not homelessness services. But several of its strengths could position it as an asset within a broader homelessness prevention, service-provision, and healing ecosystem. The following identify where those strengths align and what a future evaluation or partnership should examine.

Food Security as Homelessness Prevention Food cost is one of the pressures that pushes households toward housing loss. The program's free seed distribution and the produce it enables could ease that strain for families on the edge of instability. Evaluation should examine whether seeds, growing support, and harvests could be intentionally directed to housing-insecure Acoma and intertribal households as an upstream prevention measure, and whether community gardens could supplement food provision for people already unhoused.

Land-Based Healing and Cultural Reconnection For Native people experiencing homelessness, displacement is often compounded by separation from land, culture, and community. The program's grounding in seeds as living relatives and in traditional farming could offer a culturally rooted form of healing that mainstream services rarely provide. Evaluation should assess whether the growing seasons and seed work could be adapted as healing and reconnection opportunities for community members in housing crisis or recovery.

Stipend-Supported Pathways and Stable Income Stable income is one of the strongest protections against losing housing. The Farm Corps already places youth in stipend-supported, immersive seasons. Evaluation should examine whether these paid pathways could be targeted toward young people at elevated risk of homelessness, including those aging out of systems, and whether they lead to durable employment in agriculture, conservation, or food systems work.

Community, Belonging, and Mentorship Against Isolation Isolation is both a cause and a consequence of homelessness. The program's intergenerational, mentorship-based model and its living network of growers who save and share seed could help rebuild belonging and support for people who have become disconnected. Evaluation should consider whether this network could intentionally include community members experiencing housing instability.

Culturally Specific Response for an Overrepresented Population Native people are significantly overrepresented among those experiencing homelessness and are often underserved by mainstream systems. The program's Acoma-led, culturally grounded approach could make prevention and healing more trusted and accessible. Evaluation should examine whether its standing and relationships position it to reach people who fall through the gaps of conventional services and to bridge them to housing and support resources.

Partnership and Complementary Role Because the program is not a housing provider, its greatest value likely lies in complementing existing providers rather than duplicating their work. Evaluation should clarify where its strengths in food access, healing, and workforce development fit within the local and tribal continuum of care, what partnerships with shelters, housing programs, and tribal services would be required, and what added capacity or funding would be needed to take on such a role responsibly.

Curanderismo in the Classroom

Traditional Mexican & Southwestern Folk Healing Dual-Credit Course

Albuquerque, Bernalillo County, New Mexico

Course	Ethnic Studies III: Curanderismo (CCST 2996, Curanderismo: Traditional Mexican Medicine)
Offered Through	Career Enrichment Center, in partnership with the University of New Mexico Chicana and Chicano Studies department
Operator	Albuquerque Public Schools, Career Enrichment Center and Early College Academy
Address	807 Mountain Road NE, Albuquerque, New Mexico 87102
Phone	(505) 247-3658
Course Page	https://cec.aps.edu/cec/cec-course-catalog/business-and-world-relations
UNM Program	https://curanderismo.unm.edu/

Program Overview

Curanderismo is the traditional folk healing practice of the Southwestern United States, Mexico, and Latin America. Through the Career Enrichment Center, Albuquerque high school students can take Curanderismo as a college-preparation course that introduces the history, traditions, rituals, herbs, and remedies of this healing tradition. The course is offered as Ethnic Studies III and carries the University of New Mexico dual-credit designation CCST 2996, Curanderismo: Traditional Mexican Medicine.

The course explores how ancestors used traditional methods for healing, how those methods have shaped cultural diversity in the past and present, the upkeep and collection of medicinal plants, and what the future of the practice might look like. It features teachings on areas such as intestinal blockage, known as empacho; spiritual cleansings, known as limpias; shawl alignments, known as manteadas; and the preparation of medicinal teas, known as tes medicinales. Lessons are experiential, with demonstrations using oils, herbs, and teas to teach balance of mind, body, and spirit.

The course sits within a broader University of New Mexico College Preparation Program delivered in partnership with Albuquerque Public Schools. That program offers culturally and linguistically centered teaching intended to increase college admission and degree attainment for New Mexicans, and Curanderismo is one of four Chicana and Chicano Studies courses within it. Beyond the high school setting, the University of New Mexico also offers Curanderismo instruction to the broader public, adult learners, and medical professionals.

About the Operator

The Career Enrichment Center and Early College Academy is an Albuquerque Public Schools campus offering dual-credit and college-preparation courses to students across the district. Its Chicana and Chicano Studies sequence is delivered in partnership with the University of New Mexico College Preparation Program, whose educational framework is rooted in the interdisciplinary field of Chicana and Chicano Studies and the multidisciplinary field of Ethnic Studies. The program aims to help students advance academically while learning to navigate college, and while engaging social issues that affect many students in the Albuquerque area.

Who the Course Serves

Target Population	Albuquerque Public Schools high school students in 11th and 12th grade
Geographic Focus	Albuquerque, Bernalillo County, New Mexico
Prerequisites	None listed for the Curanderismo course; the broader College Preparation Program recommends a 2.5 grade point average
Program Type	High school dual-credit and college-preparation course in folk healing and Ethnic Studies
Broader Access	University of New Mexico also offers Curanderismo instruction to the public, adult learners, and medical professionals

Core Course Components

Holistic Health and Folk Healing

The history and practice of Southwestern folk healing, including medicinal herbs, rituals, and spiritual cleansings, with attention to the upkeep and collection of medicinal plants.

Traditional Practices and Remedies

Teachings on specific practices of the tradition, including empacho, limpias, manteadas, and the preparation of medicinal teas, grounded in how ancestors used these methods for healing.

Hands-On, Experiential Learning

Experiential demonstrations using oils, herbs, crystals, and teas to teach the balance of mind, body, and spirit, rather than lecture alone.

Cultural and Historical Context

Study of how these healing traditions have shaped cultural diversity, situated within the broader Chicana and Chicano Studies and Ethnic Studies framework of the College Preparation Program.

Credit and Enrollment

College Credit	3 University of New Mexico credits through dual credit
High School Credit	1.0 high school elective credit per semester; the course also fulfills the fourth Social Studies credit required for the class of 2029 and beyond
Schedule	Fall semester only; Wednesday and Friday, 8:40 to 10:55 a.m., plus Monday asynchronous online work
Dual Credit Requirement	Students must meet University of New Mexico requirements and complete registration through the dual-credit institution before the term begins
Fees	None listed
Program Honors	Students who complete the full four-course College Preparation Program earn college-preparation honors for graduation and 12 credit hours usable at the University of New Mexico or Central New Mexico Community College

Intended Outcomes

The course is structured to produce the following outcomes:

- Exposure to the history, traditions, rituals, herbs, and remedies of Curanderismo as a Southwestern folk healing tradition.
- College credit and high school elective credit earned simultaneously through dual enrollment.
- Hands-on familiarity with traditional practices and the collection and use of medicinal plants.
- Stronger cultural identity and historical understanding through an Ethnic Studies framework.
- A pathway toward college admission and degree attainment through the broader College Preparation Program.

Recommendations: Relevance to Homelessness Prevention, Services, and Healing

This is a credit-bearing high school course in a healing tradition, not a service program. Its relevance to homelessness lies in the specific things that make it what it is: culture as prevention, the curanderismo practices it teaches, the school setting it lives in, the dual-credit pathway it carries, and the fact that the University of New Mexico already trains medical professionals in the same tradition. The following recommendations follow from those particulars and identify what a future evaluation should examine.

Limpias and Platica as Low-Barrier Healing

The modalities at the center of this course, especially the spiritual cleansing known as a limpia and the unhurried, listening conversation between healer and person, require no insurance, diagnosis, building, or appointment. That is precisely where conventional clinical care tends to fail people who are unsheltered. Evaluation should examine whether practitioners formed in this tradition could offer healing alongside street outreach and shelter teams, in a shelter setting, and whether people who decline conventional services would accept this culturally familiar form of care.

Herbal and Plant Knowledge for People Without Clinics

Because the course teaches the upkeep, collection, and use of medicinal plants and the preparation of remedies such as medicinal teas, it carries practical knowledge of low-cost care that does not depend on a pharmacy or a clinic visit. Evaluation should consider whether this plant knowledge, taught responsibly and with attention to safety and to interactions with prescribed medication, could support basic comfort and self-care for people living outside or in shelters who have limited access to formal health care. Since these teachings are taking place in a high school, assessing the use with unsheltered youth could be examined.

A School-Based Point of Early Identification

This course reaches 11th and 12th graders inside an Albuquerque Public Schools campus, and schools are one of the few places where housing instability among youth becomes visible. Evaluation should examine whether the trust built in a culturally affirming classroom, paired with the district's existing student supports, could function as an early point to identify and connect housing-insecure students and families to help before a crisis deepens. Evaluation should also examine possible expansion into a peer helper program utilizing cultural healing within the school system.

Training a Local, Culturally Matched Healing Workforce

The fact that the University of New Mexico already extends curanderismo instruction to medical professionals, and that high school students here earn transferable college credit toward it, means the program is quietly building a pipeline of people grounded in this tradition. Mexican and Latino residents are a large share of New Mexico's population and of those experiencing homelessness. Evaluation should examine whether this pipeline could be intentionally directed toward community health, peer-support, and outreach roles that serve unhoused people in their own language and cultural frame.

Preserving Dignity and Cultural Continuity Through Crisis

Homelessness severs people from culture, family, and place as much as from housing. A tradition that treats healing as the restoration of balance in mind, body, and spirit speaks directly to that rupture in a way that a bed alone does not. Evaluation should consider whether curanderismo-informed practice, offered with consent and proper protocol, could help people

maintain identity and dignity during housing crisis and recovery, and what safeguards would keep a sacred tradition from being reduced to a service line item.

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