

El Encuentrolero

EDITION 4 * FALL 2021 * GRATITUDE

Letter from our Director of Development



Julia Cusatis

With Expansive Gratitude

November is a special time for gratitude and appreciation... to give thanks for the many amazing people, committed actions, and bountiful gifts that are gathered, shared and strengthen our community. In this edition, we recognize and celebrate the many people who have contributed to Encuentro's mission.

Our Mission

Encuentro's mission is to transform New Mexico into a thriving community for all of its residents by engaging with Latino immigrant families in education and career development opportunities that build skills for economic and social justice.

To support Encuentro's mission, fuel educational and career opportunities for immigrant adults, or the purchase of a new home, GIVE TODAY.

Make your donation at encuentronm.org

For our students — the Latino immigrant mothers and fathers — thank you for enriching our community with your culture, hard work and commitment and showing us what it means to be resilient, eager to learn, and generous, even in the face of difficult challenges.



Fall 2019 ESL graduation class.



L TO R: ESL teacher, Queta Lindernberg, Pathways Navigator, Norma Casas, and Board President, Sandra Ortsman, at 2020 Share the Love.

For Encuentro's staff, teachers, board and volunteers — thank you for acting with commitment, drive and spirit to strengthen our immigrant community, expand programs and services and create positive change.

For our essential workers, thank you for your dedication and service to the local community during difficult times.



Fall 2021 Home Health Aide students during skills practicum.

For Tu Voz Digital community journalists - thank you for amplifying stories and ensuring that the Latino immigrant perspective is included in public discourse.

For our community partners — thank you for crusading for justice and collaborating to ensure that ALL NM residents can thrive .

For our funders, donors, volunteers and friends — thank you for fueling Encuentro’s mission and strengthening immigrant family stability in New Mexico by supporting immigrant-centered adult education, career development and leadership opportunities and the purchase of our new building.

For our domestic workers and home health aides — thank you for providing quality, compassionate care and companionship to New Mexico’s elders, families and children.

For aspiring immigrant entrepreneurs — thank you for starting new businesses that improve economic mobility while strengthening the local economy.



Encuentro board, staff and students with allies Nancy Crocker and Joe Gorvetzain.



Encuentro staff thanking you for your support!

For the hands and hearts who have contributed to our new building — thank you for a new home that increases immigrant pride and power through asset ownership, increased visibility and border community impacts.

We see you... we appreciate you... and we are expansively grateful for the many ways that your contributions and collective action propels our immigrant community and Encuentro’s success.

¡Mil gracias a tod@s!





Pat Bonilla in action guiding volunteers and ESL students during class conversations.

Honoring Pat Bonilla and Her Impact on Our Community

By Ilse Grijalva

Pat Bonilla is an institution at Encuentro. Her passion for teaching, love for the immigrant community, and commitment to social justice led her to a 40 year teaching career at TVI (now known as CNM), Catholic Charities, Albuquerque Public Schools, and Encuentro. Since joining our family in 2010, Teacher Pat has become renowned as one of Encuentro's most beloved teachers.

In 2012, Pat implemented an important interpersonal dynamic into her ESL classes at Encuentro by inviting English speaking volunteers to engage in conversational language exchange with beginning ESL students to build confidence and social connection. "I'm so proud of that strategy, it started with three volunteers and before the pandemic, there were more than fifty volunteers willing to help our students. These conversations built friendships that enriched both groups culturally and socially."

"I have always loved teaching adult immigrants. They are hardworking people, passionate about learning. They know that every minute they spend in a classroom, they will learn something new. All my students have taught me so much about hard work, hope for the future, faith, and positive energy. I have hope because of them." –Pat Bonilla

On September 22, Pat celebrated her 70th birthday and used the opportunity to support Encuentro by encouraging family and friends to contribute \$7, \$1 for each decade. Response was AMAZING with over 30 donors celebrating Pat by collectively contributing nearly \$3,000! Thank you Pat Bonilla. You are an inspiration and your leadership, passion, and love for people has made a difference in our community.

Pat Bonilla and her 2019 Beginning ESL students.



OUR NEW BUILDING
is in the heart of Albuquerque's Barelas neighborhood.



With aspirations to own the building outright, our current phase of fundraising is a goal to raise \$158, 676 in order to complete renovations and begin classes in person in Spring 2022.

[CLICK HERE TO GIVE OR CONTACT:](#)

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andrea@encuentronm.org

Sandra Ortsman
Board President
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Julia Cusatis
Development Director
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Did you know?

★ 225 immigrant adults are engaged in Encuentro's online classes this academic year and building essential language, literacy, computer and job skills to succeed in a 21st century economy.

★ With the purchase of a new home, plans are underway to use a hybrid teaching model, with both in person and online classes.

We're over 30% to our capital fundraising goal.
★ ★ ★
To date \$440,842 of \$1,265,000 has been raised!.

To schedule a public or private tour, contact us at info@encuentronm.org or 505-247-2920.

Messages of Gratitude

FROM OUR STUDENTS

Two of Encuentro's ESL teachers, Amy Zhupikov and Queta Lindenberg, engaged their students in a gratitude writing assignment. Here are a few of the messages they wrote:

"I give thanks on this special day, for being a student of Encuentro where I feel like my family. I give thanks too because I'm a member of the Board of Directors of Encuentro. Thanks to Encuentro for allowing me to make my dreams come true."

—**Martha Hurtado, High Beginner Level, ESL**



"We appreciate Encuentro for the friends that we have met. Also, we want to give thanks for the tools that Encuentro has for the students. The teachers are very helpful in our learning ways. The day care is important to attend classes."

—**Guadalupe Sanchez & Rosa Maria Gonzalez, Intermediate Level, ESL**

"We are grateful for our family and friends. We are grateful for our life and health. We are thankful for the opportunities to study at Encuentro also we appreciate the support. We are thankful for the progress made during our class."

—**Fatima Carrasco & Cynthia Hernandez, Advanced Level, ESL**



"We are grateful to Encuentro for providing us with such a wonderful experience. We appreciate the support the community gives to Encuentro and also the effort from volunteers, teachers and classmates to help us to get to our new home. Our dream was made possible by collaboration with other people and organizations. We can share this wonderful home with others, and they will be able to learn to work together to achieve a new dream." —**Iliana Lopez & Claudia Reyes, Advanced Level, ESL**

Our Team

Crimilda Andrade
Administrative Assistant

Brook Bernini
Training and Employment
Coordinator

Fiore Aragón
Leadership Development
Fellow

Norma Casas
Pathways Navigator

Julia Cusatis
Development Director

Fernando Flores
Home Health Aide
Assistant

Felipe Duran
Education Associate

Ilse Grijalva-Lastiri
Communications

Teresa Guevara
Education Director

Iliana López
Education Coordinator

Mayte López
Home Health Coordinator

Andrea Plaza
Executive Director

Veronica Salazar
Digital Literacy Coordinator

ENCUENTRO'S SECOND ANNUAL FRIENDSGIVING CELEBRATION

Sunday, Nov 21, 2021 • 4:30 - 6pm MST



Suggested donation
of \$20 to participate
and support
Encuentro's mission.

TO GIVE, text the word
"friendsgiving"
to 505-322-6301.



MARK YOUR CALENDARS! Encuentro's 2nd annual Friendsgiving, a community-wide live streamed celebration and holiday auction fundraiser supporting Encuentro's mission, is coming.

This spectacular online event features an incredible line-up of musicians – Baracutanga, Nohe y Sus Santos, Las Flores del Valle, Lara Manzaneres, Beto Jamaica y Lupita Mendoza, Eli del Puerto, Arroz con Mango, Performance Poet Carlos Contreras, and a fantastic online holidays gifts auction with art, services and other adventures. Friendsgiving will be a bilingual and live streamed event. Guests can access the event on Encuentro's FacebookLive or gain full Zoom access by RSVPing at www.encuentronm.org. RSVP to receive early access to the online auction, entry in a special drawing, and the Zoom link to engage in games with door prizes and chat during the event.

*Look for details on Encuentro's social media.
You won't want to miss this event!*



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