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El Coste Humano de los Incendios Forestales

8

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Chris M. Fresquez
President / CEO - Publisher

Toni C. Fresquez
Editor

Juan Carlos Uribe
Translator / Web Services

Raya Tkachenko
Layout/Production

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Mailing Address:
P.O. Box 460428, Glendale CO 80246

Colorado:
8400 East Crescent Parkway
Greenwood Village CO 80111

New Mexico:
500 Marquette Ave. NW,
Albuquerque NM 87102



800-886-4054
303-672-0800
720-368-5387 Fax



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THE WEEKLY ISSUE El Semanario

We Speak Your Language



Our podcast features a series of conversations with local and national influencers who engage with our communities and reflect on our responsibilities.

- Democracy
- Reproductive Justice
- Environment
- Immigration
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- LGBTQ+



Luis Torres, Ph.D.

A long-time educator and administrator, having taught in higher education since 1972, first as a graduate student and then as English professor. He later became the Professor and Chair of the Department of Chicana/o Studies at Metropolitan State University of Denver. He became the Deputy Provost for Academic and Student Affairs until retiring in 2017.



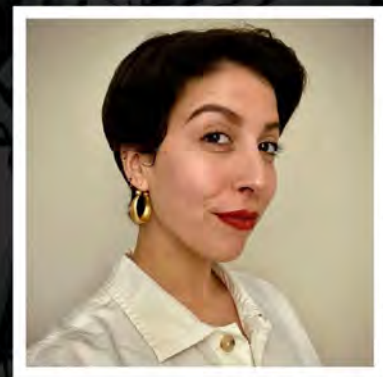
Ivana Farbman

A Professional Broadcaster residing in Buenos Aires, Argentina. Specializing in English and Spanish Literature with a degree in Tourism. Passion to communicate, inform, express opinions and feelings, and to delve into topics that make us grow every day more.



Jen Samano

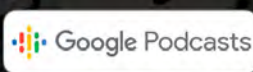
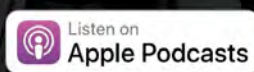
A community organizer and civil rights advocate working with ACLU of Colorado. Worked as a campaign organizer for Planned Parenthood of the Rocky Mountains. Also organized for the 2016 election cycle in the Sixth Congressional District. Served as an intern with SEIU Local 105, fighting for fair wages. Dedicated to Coloradans' voting rights, access to health care, disability rights and independent journalism.



Aurea Bolaños Perea

Strategic Communications Director at the Colorado Organization for Latina Opportunity and Reproductive Rights (COLOR). She has worked in advocacy and political organizing for over seven years centering Latinx women at the forefront of social justice and liberation movements.

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Commentary/Comentario

Racist Rhetoric Always Generates Violence and Death

Maribel Hastings and David Torres

The deadly shooting in Buffalo, New York, which took the lives of ten people, mostly African Americans, at the hands of an unstable white supremacist is tragic. But the crude reality is that it was also anticipated. Indeed, it seems that for a good part of U.S. society—the recalcitrant and supremacist part—“resolving” social problems is not done through dialogue or analysis, much less mutual understanding, but plain and simply through armed violence, so much so that this has become a sign of the times in this nation. In fact, no one is surprised that a sadly divided country—particularly since the rise to power of Trumpism, where an Anglo-Saxon group thinks that the growing number of ethnic minorities wants to replace them—would be fertile ground for the development of racist fanatics who do not hesitate to take advantage of that other scourge that afflicts this nation: easy access to weapons. Those 21 million firearms, among them revolvers, shotguns, and automatic weapons, that (accord-

ing to the National Sport Shooting Foundation (NSSFI) were sold in the United States in 2020, the worst year of the pandemic, are the most irrefutable proof that this market will not stop bearing fruit as long as the tendency toward racism persists, which is also a breeding ground for that other terrifying phenomenon, domestic terrorism, to which young white suprema-

“It turns out that racist rhetoric, sooner or later, always generates violence and death.”

cists, captive clients of the National Rifle Association (NRA), are prone. This pernicious influence of weapons is not only a domestic issue, but also exported, which explains in large part the warring nature of this nation. According to the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI), 36% of arms exports between 2015 and 2019 came from the United States, with no less than 97 clients, a truly dominating country in this matter. And the worst part is that it is po-

litical and public figures who are fanning the flames with their incendiary rhetoric, without fear for the consequences this discourse could have on frail minds. That's why, for many minorities, their main worry is precisely this white nationalist agenda, which vehemently promotes the “Great Replacement” theory, a historical absurdity that has nothing to do with the world we need to be today, in this 21st century. Because we can't forget that it's been Republican figures, beginning with ex-President Donald Trump, who promote the idea that our southern border with Mexico is “out of control” and that we are being “invaded” by undocumented immigrants, for example. In fact, the manifesto of Payton Gendron, the 18 year-old individual who perpetrated the massacre in Buffalo, makes reference to an unprecedented “invasion” to try to justify his despicable acts. But at the end of the day his racism and hatred toward African Americans made him choose a supermarket in an area of this community to carry out his killing. Whether Latino, African American, Muslim, Asian American, or Jewish, we are all targets of the hate and prejudice that moves these individuals.



Photo/Foto: América's Voice



Photo/Foto: América's Voice

This includes other Anglo-Saxons who do not share their ideals, as in the case of Charlottesville, Virginia, where another unbalanced person rammed his car into a counterprotest that repudiated the racist message of the event, killing a young white woman. In 2019 in El Paso, Texas another white supremacist, Patrick Crusius, shot up a Walmart, killing 23 people and wounding another 23, most of whom were Hispanic. And there have been attacks on synagogues, African American churches, mosques, etcetera, because these individuals' hate is against any minority. Anglo-Saxons' “Great Replacement” theory about minorities has passed from the fringes of extremist and white supremacist groups to being normalized by conservative

TV hosts, as in the case of Tucker Carlson on Fox News, and Republican politicians who have given their approval to racist speech—if this means mobilizing the followers who put them in power. One thing that's sad about this situation is that a sector of the population avails itself of this racist discourse and favors those figures, as we saw with the triumph of Trump in 2016, with their vote. Just like we will see in future contests, there is a receptive audience and politicians know that. But when someone interprets this rhetoric literally and it culminates in violence or death those same politicians wash their hands of all responsibility. The same thing happened with the attack on the U.S. Capitol

See Hastings/Torres on page 21

La Retórica Racista Siempre Generará Violencia y Muerte

Maribel Hastings and David Torres

Por más lamentable que haya sido el mortal tiroteo en Buffalo, Nueva York, que cobró la vida de 10 personas, en su mayoría afroamericanos, a manos de un desequilibrado supremacista blanco, la cruda realidad es que era de anticiparse.

En efecto, pues tal parece que para una buena parte de la sociedad estadounidense —la más recalcitrante y supremacista— “resolver” los problemas sociales no es el diálogo, ni el análisis, ni mucho menos el entendimiento

mutuo, sino simple y sencillamente recurrir a la violencia armada, misma que se ha convertido en el signo de los tiempos en esta nación.

De hecho, a nadie sorprende que un país lamentablemente dividido, en particular desde el ascenso del trumpismo al poder, donde un sector anglosajón cree que las crecientes minorías étnicas quieren reemplazarlos, sea terreno fértil para el desarrollo de fanáticos racistas que no dudan en sacar ventaja del otro flagelo que aqueja a esta nación: el fácil acceso a las armas.

Las 21 millones de armas de fuego, entre revólveres, escopetas

y fusiles automáticos que según la propia National Sport Shooting Foundation (NSSF) se vendieron en Estados Unidos en 2020, el peor año de la pandemia, son la prueba más fehaciente de que este mercado no dejará de fructificar mientras persista la tendencia hacia el racismo, que es a su vez caldo de cultivo de ese otro fenómeno más que aterrador: el terrorismo doméstico, al que son tan proclives los jóvenes blancos supremacistas, clientes cautivos de la Asociación Nacional del Rifle (NRA), por su sigla en inglés.

Esa influencia perniciosa de las armas no es solo doméstica, sino

hacia el exterior, lo que explica en gran medida el carácter bélico de esta nación: según el Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI), el 36% de las exportaciones de armas entre 2015 y 2019 correspondió a Estados Unidos, con nada menos que 96 clientes, el verdadero país dominante en ese rubro.

Y lo peor del caso es que sean figuras políticas y públicas las que echen leña al fuego con su retórica incendiaria, sin medir las consecuencias que pueda tener su discurso en una mente febril. Por ello, para muchas minorías la principal preocupación es precisamente

“Pues sucede que la retórica racista, tarde o temprano, siempre generará violencia y muerte.”

esa agenda nacionalista blanca, que pormueve con vehemencia la teoría del “gran reemplazo”, un absurdo histórico que nada tiene que ver con el mundo que necesitamos hoy, en este siglo XXI.

Porque no olvidemos que han sido figuras republicanas,

Vea Hastings/Torres/Esp, página 17

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Capitán de la Danza: Raúl Tlaloc Chávez de Portillo, Huitzilopochtli

Daniel Stange

Nacimos para morir. We are born to die. We come here to give testament that the world is still in motion

Not many people can understand why someone died until they explain why they lived.

No para siempre aquí. Not here for always. *Solo un poco tiempo que vivimos.* Our life is brief. *Aunque sea Jade se rompe. Aunque sea oro se quiebra. Hasta las plumas se desgarran.*

Just a short time here is our life. We realize these words as our life matures and age makes the days slip past in the blink of an eye. When we are young, we seldom think of the fragility and fleetingness of our own life. Knowledge of past gives us a respective timeline and the longer our timeline the further our memories can reflect the proposition that we apply to life's mission or life's fulfillment. Everybody loves to think that we come to life for a purpose and when your energy is focused to find and fulfill that purpose you cultivate bliss. But few of us are chosen to bring our mission in alignment with the mission of the larger family-community-society-nation.

Raúl Tlaloc Chávez Portillo was among those few. We might never know if that is because he was fated to bring the energy of our native traditions here or because his love for the tradition manifests into an energy that so many others were attracted to. We may never know if he was an ancient spirit returned to guide our footsteps, or a pioneer of his own destiny that forged a path for us to follow. We should never doubt that our human existence is intricately woven with each other and although we take time to reflect upon the life of one person, there is no context unless we compare that life with our own and those in our circles. We are a human family and some of us bring the family close



Raúl Tlaloc Chávez de Portillo, en Paz Descansa, February 29, 1952 - May 7, 2022.

and some of us branch outward beyond the constraint. One is not good or bad, and some like Raul do both. His family is spread across the Rio Grande region like the pueblos of ancient days. Yet, he adopted the Denver Chicano community and we responded in kind and laid him to rest in the Crown Hill cemetery on May 19th, 2022.

I met him at La Raza Park in 1995 when I first began to don feathers on my head and shake rattles on my ankles. I learned to carry the stringed *concha* (mandolin) and sing *alabanzas* that hold the secrets of our native past by his side. I shared a final meal with him Friday morning when he had left the hospital and spoke to him as if we would be dancing together next week when his wounds were healed. He was very happy that day and visited with quite a few old friends and family.

He could not sleep well and when he finally did lay down at the sofa in front of his altar, his breath abandoned him and I wept all morning Saturday as the *grupo* and his children, grandchildren and even great-grandchildren embraced his body and burned incense to lighten his spirit. We sang songs for hours, as even the Denver Police allowed us extra time to honor and respect our beloved teacher and elder. A hawk flew down and sat in the tree above the home when they carried him away.

We all felt the bliss of effortless transition that morning and though the weight of sorrow and loss are still pressing upon our shoulders and hearts, we stand stronger upon his shoulders and lift our feathers of prayer into the sky. We bring to fruition the lessons of our ancestors and the ceremonies they in-

structed us with. We shout Mexika Tiahui - "People go forward" as our *danzante* clarion call that guides our efforts. We know there is work to be done. We have not forgotten our roots. Deep into this continent from thousands of years ago we demand to be recognized as one of the original mother cultures of the earth. Anahuac, Abya Yala, Hah-Nu-Nah (Turtle Island) We speak many tongues and hold many rituals, but we all dance. We all survive, and we all continue bringing our ancient messages back to the light. Some can sing beautiful songs about it. Some of us write prose or organize ceremonies or simply talk with neighbors and friends. We all resist the erasure.

We have been here before and we will be here again. The truth of eternity is that it never began. It will never end, it only transforms. We are all constantly changing and transforming and just as death will surely carry our body back to the earth, we will carry our songs and dances back into the community and society. Together the people are what controls markets and economies and developments and political ambitions. We are waking up to the dreams of our children. We should reflect on the dreams of our childhood. Dreams make for a healthy imagination.

Raul shared with me his dreams. He would say, "live the dreams that you see are helping the people and protect yourself from the dreams that cause you to be afraid." Raul did not talk to me about manifesting dreams or controlling our destiny. He would say that God calls us to be part of something bigger than one person. That we could see the opportunities before us and that we need to speak with our heart to make the choices which will benefit others and not just ourselves. That we should choose the path that respects the ways of our ancestors and continues to reveal the truth about who we are. His mission was planted from those Elders, and he

“

Raúl did not talk to me about manifesting dreams or controlling our destiny. He would say that God calls us to be part of something bigger than one person.

did the best to care for that seed and see that flower and bloom.

His mission does not end with his death because he planted many of these same seeds as he traveled and danced across the continent. Atlantic Coast to Pacific Coast, as far north as Chicago and south to Chiapas, México. He carried a spirit that was keeping rooted on this continent but like a Hummingbird, he shared his message through a drum beat and a dance step. Perhaps, I was only so fortunate to have been so close to him because it is my destiny to put words to his message. Perhaps I am cultivating another seed from our ancestors that he helped to spread among the places he journeyed. I feel blessed that he chose to stay in Denver and that he could lean on me when there were challenges. I will continue forward.

Many thanks and prayers for the Chávez family and for all the *danzantes* that ever stood in circle with Raul. Your energy will never be destroyed. Thanks to my cousin, Renee Fajardo, for always supporting Raúl and his home and keeping our traditions centered in your work. Thank you to all the *Capitanes* and *Generales* that recognized Raúl and his *palabra*. Thank you to all the children that call Raul their *Jefe* and despite all misgivings are still proud of themselves and continue making their lives better.

Mexika Tiahui!!!

Daniel Stange is the Grant Manager with Sisters of Color United for Education in Denver, Colorado.

Read More Commentary:

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Commentary / *Comentario*

Letter to My Student Teachers

Lisa Arrastia

Dear Student-Colleagues: This is a note of fierce love for you.

You have seen and experienced more in the last few years than anyone should experience in a lifetime; indeed, no one should ever experience any of.

A global pandemic. Multiple massacres: among them, Black Americans targeted, most recently in Buffalo, NY, and, at this time, 18 babies and one teacher murdered in Texas on May 24 – and, maybe not so ironically, all were murdered

by what I can only say are our own babies, the young people we, as a national collective of teachers, recently had in our educational embrace. The perpetrators were only 18. They were recently ours.

And yet you persevere. You will return to work tomorrow and find a way to hold space for the babies still alive who surround you. You will do so despite State curricular limits. You will do what you know is necessary because that is what we've taught you in every class you must do. You have believed us, and I have seen you enact what you've been taught with grace and

love and academic, intellectual brilliance. You are the educational artists of the future. So, tomorrow, you will be again.

You'll hear that "children are resilient." A profound adolescent psychotherapist from Woodstock, New York, Terry Funk Antman, contests that notion. Children are not resilient. The idea of resiliency makes adults feel better. Indeed, it is you and the kids' families, friends, and we who support you to hold the kids that allow the babies to move through the continuous eruptions of national, community, and family violence.

You may be told by authorities not to mention these atrocities and yet you know that our babies in your classrooms are holding onto the trauma. Some kids actually may not know what's going on, but they can sniff it, they can sense their family's and your efforts to hold back from them pain and bewilderment, fatigue from the propensity of this nation to attack; our ache from tragedy. No classroom is neutral emotionally or politically. Our kids' selves and our selves leak into and between the cracks of standardization. The politics of difference, the act of grappling with the American

imaginary that we're all safe seeps through.

I write to you tonight to hold you as high as I can, to let you know that I know that the faculty of this department (men- and women-identified alike) are, like poet Marge Piercy says in her poem "For Strong Women": We are "determined to do something others are determined not be done. [We are] pushing up on the bottom of a lead coffin lid. [We are] trying to raise a manhole cover with [our] head, [we are] trying to butt [our] way through a steel

See [Arrastia](#) on page 19

Vote Out These Death-Dealing, NRA-Enthralled Republicans—Now

Thom Hartmann

President Biden is right. "For God's Sake," and our children's sake, we must do something about gun violence in America. And we must do it now.

Back in 1996, after a few years of mass shootings, Australia experienced a mass slaughter on a scale like we saw on Tuesday in Texas. Their Supreme Court hadn't

ruled that Australian politicians could be owned by industries, so they passed extensive gun control and a nationwide gun buyback program. It was a turning point, and the mass shootings have since largely stopped.

Over at Daily Kos, Walter Einkel has summarized how many millions of dollars the top Republicans in Congress have taken from the weapons industry: it's a grim

toll, starting with Mitt Romney taking over \$13 million and Richard Burr over \$6 million.

We've been at this point over and over again in America: will this be the one that punches through the wall of money the NRA and the weapons industry it fronts for wraps around Republicans?

Over on Fox News, one brilliant idea to deal with the slaughter of our children in our schools is to

issue "Ballistic Blankets" to every school. This is how sick and twisted the Republicans taking money from the gun industry and their allies have become.

Twenty years ago, car accidents were the leading killer of children and youth: today it's guns.

At the turn of the 21st century, there were about 14 car-crash deaths among young people (aged 1-24) per 100,000 young Americans, and only a bit over 7 gun deaths per 100,000. This year, almost 11 out of 100,000 children died from guns while only 8 per 100K died from car crashes.

And most all of those child gun deaths, mass shootings, and school shootings, which don't happen in any other developed country in the world, are entirely preventable.

The GOP gifted gun manufacturers with near-absolute immunity against product liability lawsuits, so manufacturers have zero incentive to sell safer weapons or dial back their lobbying and marketing.

Their immunity from lawsuits is so extreme that the only way the parents of the kids murdered at Sandy Hook could hold Remington responsible was to instead go after their marketing: they had to point out how the company was "selling masculinity" to get guns into the hands of insecure boys.

The danger of an AR15 weapon-of-war in an elementary school couldn't even be discussed.

America must "regulate" — a word found in the Second Amendment, it's only appearance in the entire Constitution — guns.

A starting point is bringing back the assault weapons ban that Bill Clinton got passed in 1996 and George W. Bush let expire in 2006.

“There are now more guns in America than there are people, a bizarre situation that no other developed country in the world experiences. Literally none.”

There are other commonsense solutions, like universal background checks, we could also put into law.

For example, back in the early years of the 20th century when cars had become so common they were regularly killing people in auto accidents, states hit on a simple formula to encourage safe driving and maintain clear lines of responsibility when things went wrong.

- Every car was required to be registered every year with the state; if it was found out in public without registration it could be confiscated.
- Every driver was required to prove knowledge of how to safely drive, with both a written and a real-life driving test.
- And every driver was required to carry liability insurance, so if there was an accident the victims were covered, regardless of who was at fault.

For about 100 years, drivers have lived with these three simple requirements, and they've worked. The liability insurance is particularly effective: as a "free market solution," insurance companies now compile information on drivers' safety records, including their history of violence, and set their rates accordingly.

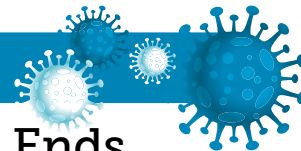
See [Hartmann](#) on page 18

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Millions of Kids Would Lose Health Care if Covid-19 Emergency Coverage Ends

By Jenny Manrique

Some 40 million children currently enrolled in Medicaid or CHIP (Children's Health Insurance Program) nationwide are at risk of losing their health insurance once the COVID-19 Public Health Emergency (PHE) expires. Declared in early 2020, the PHE provides a federal guarantee of continuous Medicaid coverage during the pandemic.

Initially set to expire on July 15, the Biden administration last week extended the declaration to October 15.

According to the California Department of Health Care Services (DHCS), of the 5.7 million children covered by Medi-Cal (California's Medicaid health care program) in the state, between 800,000 to 1.2 million kids will lose their coverage once the PHE expires. States, meanwhile, will have to once again verify eligibility for those enrolled in Medicaid, including kids.

"This will disproportionately impact children of color, who are more likely to rely on Medicaid for coverage," said Mayra Álvarez, president of The Children's Partnership, during a [May 20 briefing](#) hosted by *Ethnic Media Services*.

“This will disproportionately impact children of color, who are more likely to rely on Medicaid for coverage.”

Mayra Álvarez, The Children's Partnership

"Seventy five percent of the more than five million kids covered are kids of color who will miss out on critical preventive and primary care services that are especially important for our youngest children," she said.

Under the PHE, families could stay enrolled in health care coverage through Medicaid without additional administrative renewals or having to prove their eligibility. Free COVID testing and treatments, vaccinations, telehealth access and other public programs were also available.

"Children still need to catch up on their well child visits that were not only missed during this pandemic, but that are particularly important during the first few years of a child's life when 90% of her brain development occurs," said Álvarez.

For Georgina Maldonado, Executive Director of the Community Health Initiative of Orange County, these changes have helped address longstanding systemic barriers "we have been fighting historically as a community."

"If this is working, why bring back the barriers that have prevented us from obtaining health-care coverage?" Maldonado said.

California Governor Gavin Newsom has launched a multi-



Photo/Foto: AdobeStock

Some 40 million children currently enrolled in Medicaid or CHIP nationwide are at risk of losing their health insurance once the COVID-19 Public Health Emergency expires. / *Unos 40 millones de niños inscritos en Medicaid o CHIP en todo el país, corren el riesgo de perder su seguro médico debido a la expiración de la Emergencia de Salud Pública por el COVID-19.*

billion-dollar initiative to prioritize child and youth mental health, including early care and learning investments. Thanks to grassroots organizations like Maldonado's, undocumented children are now eligible for full scope Medi-Cal, which includes health, dental and vision care. Despite these efforts,

less than half of uninsured children who are eligible for Medicaid are enrolled in the program.

That is why the Children's Partnership has been working with Assembly member Blanca Rubio (D-Baldwin Park) on AB 2402,

See Kids on page 17

Niños Perderían la Asistencia Sanitaria Si Se Acaba la Cobertura de Covid-19

Por Jenny Manrique

Unos 40 millones de niños inscritos en Medicaid o CHIP (Programa de seguro médico para niños) en todo el país, corren el riesgo de perder su seguro médico debido a la expiración de la Emergencia de Salud Pública (PHE en inglés) por el COVID-19. La PHE ofrece garantía federal de cobertura continua de Medicaid durante la pandemia.

Aprobado en marzo de 2020, el PHE debía terminar el 15 de julio, pero el gobierno de Joe Biden lo ha prorrogado hasta el 15 de octubre.

Según el Departamento de Servicios de Salud de California (DHCS), de los 5,7 millones de niños cubiertos por Medi-Cal (el programa de atención sanitaria de Medicaid de California) en el estado, entre 800.000 y 1,2 millones de niños perderán su cobertura una vez que expire el PHE. Los estados, por su parte, tendrán que volver a

verificar la elegibilidad de los inscritos en Medicaid, incluidos los niños.

"Esto tendrá un impacto desproporcionado en los niños de color,

“Esto tendrá un impacto desproporcionado en los niños de color, que tienen más probabilidades de depender de Medicaid para la cobertura.” dijo Mayra Álvarez, The Children's Partnership

or, que tienen más probabilidades de depender de Medicaid para la cobertura", dijo Mayra Álvarez, presidente de The Children's Partnership, durante una [sesión informativa](#) del 20 de mayo organizada por *Ethnic Media Services*.

"El setenta y cinco por ciento de los más de cinco millones de

niños cubiertos son niños de color que se perderán los servicios críticos de atención preventiva y primaria que son especialmente importantes para nuestros niños más pequeños."

Con el PHE, las familias podían seguir inscritas en la cobertura sanitaria a través de Medicaid sin necesidad de renovaciones administrativas adicionales ni de tener que demostrar su elegibilidad. También se ofrecían pruebas y tratamientos gratuitos de COVID, vacunas, acceso a la telesalud y otros programas públicos.

"Los niños siguen necesitando ponerse al día en sus visitas de bienestar infantil que no sólo se perdieron durante esta pandemia, sino que son especialmente importantes durante los primeros años de vida de un niño, cuando se produce el 90% de su desarrollo cerebral", dijo Álvarez.

Para Georgina Maldonado, directora ejecutiva de la Iniciativa de

Salud Comunitaria del Condado de Orange, estos cambios han ayudado a abordar las barreras sistémicas de larga data "contra las que hemos estado luchando históricamente como comunidad".

"Si esto funciona, ¿por qué volver a poner las barreras que nos han impedido obtener cobertura sanitaria?", dijo Maldonado.

El gobernador de California, Gavin Newsom, ha puesto en marcha una iniciativa multimillonaria para dar prioridad a la salud mental de los niños y los jóvenes, que incluye inversiones en atención y aprendizaje tempranos. Gracias a organizaciones de base como la de Maldonado, los niños indocumentados son ahora elegibles para el Medi-Cal de alcance completo, que incluye atención médica, dental y de la vista. A pesar de estos esfuerzos, menos de la mitad de los niños sin seguro que son elegibles para Medicaid están inscritos en el programa.

Por ello, Children's Partnership ha estado trabajando con la miembro de la Asamblea Blanca Rubio (demócrata de Baldwin Park) en el proyecto de ley AB 2402, que garantizaría la cobertura continua de Medi-Cal durante varios años para los niños de 0 a 5 años. El Senado ha incluido el proyecto de ley en su lista de prioridades presupuestarias que se está negociando con la Asamblea.

"La oposición al proyecto de ley proviene de personas que creen que la pobreza es una responsabilidad personal, y que debería haber pasos para que la gente demuestre su elegibilidad para estos programas", añadió Álvarez. "A algunas personas les preocupa el coste de los programas en general".

A nivel federal, la expiración del PHE significará que 80 millones de personas -incluyendo 37 millones de niños- necesitarán que se

Ve a Niños, página 18

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Where Wildfires Rage in New México, Many Homes Are Uninsured

By Michael Benanav

Outside of the Glorieta Adventure Camp dining hall, 56-year-old Lisa Blackburde was having an emotion-filled conversation with a couple of other evacuees.

Nearly three weeks ago, as the fast-moving Calf Canyon/Hermits Peak fire made a run toward her home near Ledoux, New México, Blackburde heeded a mandatory evacuation order that had already been in place for days. Her boy-

friend, Michael Pacheco, remained behind to save what he could. "He was a seasonal firefighter for the state," she said, "so he knows what he's doing." They have a horse, a dog, 13 cows and three new calves. "And four of the cows are still expecting."

If Pacheco hadn't stayed to put out spot fires, she was sure it would have all gone up in flames. And they don't have homeowners insurance.

"I don't know if we ever really thought about it, because we couldn't afford it anyway," Black-



From left to right: Damian Duran, Senaida Duran, Raúl Valdez and Yvonne Durán, who evacuated from the Mora Valley in New México. / De izquierda a derecha: Damián Durán, Senaida Durán, Raúl Valdez e Yvonne Durán, que evacuaron del Valle de Mora en Nuevo México.



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burde said. "We live on about \$1,000 a month. As it is, we can make do. Michael cuts and bales hay, raises cows, and we have our place." Choking up, she added, "We would've been devastated if we lost everything." Last she'd heard, their mobile home and animals were still safe.

The Calf Canyon/Hermits Peak fire has now officially been declared the largest in New México history. Between 260 and 400 homes are estimated to have been lost to it so far, and authorities caution that this number is likely to rise as the blaze continues to rage along the eastern flank of the Sangre de Cristos. Additionally, more than 200 houses were gutted in April's McBride fire around Ruidoso. On May 4, President Biden approved a disaster declaration that frees up federal funding to help homeowners rebuild, including, crucially, "low-cost loans to cover uninsured property losses."

With so many homes lost in such a short period of time, lack of homeowners insurance in New México has emerged as a persistent and growing issue. According to state regulators, it can be exceedingly difficult to obtain coverage in areas of high wildfire risk. Among the factors that companies take into account are whether an address is on a paved or dirt road (paved is better); whether it borders National Forest land (generally not good); whether there are hydrants nearby (a big plus); and whether the local fire department is professional or volunteer (professional is better).

Those considerations put many rural New Mexicans at an inherent disadvantage. An estimated

131,600 housing units in New México are at "high and extreme risk" from wildfire, according to Verisk Analytics Inc., a data analytics and risk assessment firm.

The situation has become increasingly fraught — "especially over the last five years," said Janet Ruiz, a spokesperson for the Insurance Information Institute, a New York-based industry association. "With climate change, it's hotter and drier and windier. We're seeing more and more wildfires in areas where there are houses ... If a company wants to have less risk

“

"I don't know if we ever really thought about it, because we couldn't afford it anyway. We live on about \$1,000 a month."

Lisa Blackburde

on the books in a certain state, policies won't be renewed." Those who are able to keep their insurance in higher-risk areas are now paying more for it.

As a result, some homeowners in New México have been priced out of the market altogether, while others are being denied coverage after decades of faithfully paying their premiums.

For 44 years, Senaida and Damian Duran, a couple in their 70s, had insurance for their home in the Mora Valley. "But in 2016, we got an email saying they wouldn't renew us," recalled Senaida who, with her husband, is among the more than 700 evacuees taking shelter at the

Glorieta camp. "We went to our agent, and tried again and again to get it, but he couldn't find anyone who would give it to us because we live too close to the mountain."

She believes their house is safe for now. One of her sons-in-law, Leonard Maestas, has remained in the evacuation zone to protect it. "He's spraying down the house, the wood pile, anything he can," said Raul Valdez, another son-in-law, who accompanied the Durans to safety, along with his wife, Yvonne.

But insurance problems are no longer limited to remote rural areas. In April 2021, Mark Castelin was informed that the insurance on his home in a development near Santa Fe Community College was going to be revoked.

"They claimed that Rancho Viejo South was adjacent to the Santa Fe National Forest," he said. It isn't.

Castelin filed a complaint with the Office of the Superintendent of Insurance, the state agency that regulates the industry. He found a sympathetic agent in Española who was willing to help him sort things out with the company and, after much time and stress, he got his policy renewed.

The Office of the Superintendent of Insurance performs a complicated dance, attempting to keep insurance available and affordable for as many New Mexicans as possible while allowing companies enough freedom over prices and policies to make it worth their while to continue operating in the state.

As wildfire risk increases, so has the challenge of balancing these opposing aims. When Gov. Michelle Lujan Grisham declared

Donde los Incendios Hacen Estragos, Muchas Casas No Están Aseguradas



Lisa Blackburne evacuó su casa cerca de Ledoux, dejando a su novio -un bombero estacional retirado- para proteger la propiedad. No tienen seguro. / Lisa Blackburne evacuated from her home near Ledoux, leaving behind her boyfriend - a retired seasonal firefighter - to protect the property. They don't have insurance.

Por Michael Benanav

Fuera del comedor del campamento de aventura de Glorieta, Lisa Blackburne, de 56 años, mantenía una conversación llena de emoción con un par de otros evacuados.

Hace casi tres semanas, cuando el veloz incendio de Calf Canyon/ Hermits Peak se dirigía hacia su casa, cerca de Ledoux, Blackburne acató una orden de evacuación obligatoria que ya estaba en vigor desde hacía días. Su novio, Michael Pacheco, se quedó atrás para salvar lo que pudiera. "Era un bombero de temporada para el estado", dijo, "así que sabe lo que hace". Tienen un caballo, un perro, 13 vacas y tres terneros nuevos. "Y cuatro de las vacas siguen esperando".

“

"No sé si alguna vez pensamos en ello, porque de todos modos no podríamos pagarlo. Vivimos con unos 1.000 dólares al mes."

Lisa Blackburne

Si Pacheco no se hubiera quedado para apagar los incendios puntuales, estaba segura de que todo habría ardido en llamas. Y no tienen seguro de hogar.

"No sé si alguna vez pensamos en ello, porque de todos modos no podríamos pagarlo", dijo Blackburne. "Vivimos con unos 1.000 dólares al mes. Tal y como están

las cosas, podemos arreglárnoslas". Michael corta y empaca heno, cría vacas y tenemos nuestra casa". Asfixiada, añadió: "Habríamos quedado destrozados si lo hubiéramos perdido todo". Lo último que supo fue que su casa móvil y sus animales seguían a salvo.

El incendio de Calf Canyon/ Hermits Peak ha sido declarado oficialmente el mayor de la historia de Nuevo México. Se calcula que hasta ahora se han perdido entre 260 y 400 casas, y las autoridades advierten que es probable que esta cifra aumente a medida que las llamas sigan avanzando a lo largo del flanco oriental de la Cordillera de los Cristos. Además, más de 200 casas fueron destruidas por el incendio de McBride en abril en los alrededores de Ruidoso. El 4 de mayo, el presidente Biden aprobó una declaración de catástrofe que libera fondos federales para ayudar a los propietarios a reconstruir, incluyendo, fundamentalmente, "préstamos de bajo coste para cubrir las pérdidas de propiedades no aseguradas".

Con tantas viviendas perdidas en tan poco tiempo, la falta de seguros para los propietarios de viviendas en Nuevo México ha surgido como un problema persistente y creciente. Según los reguladores del estado, puede ser muy difícil obtener cobertura en zonas de alto riesgo de incendios forestales. Entre los factores que las compañías tienen en cuenta están si una dirección está en un camino pavimentado o de tierra (el pavimentado es mejor); si limita con terrenos del Bosque Nacional

(generalmente no es bueno); si hay hidrantes cerca (una gran ventaja); y si el departamento de bomberos local es profesional o voluntario (el profesional es mejor).

Estas consideraciones colocan a muchos habitantes de zonas rurales de Nuevo México en una desventaja inherente. Se estima que 131.600 viviendas en Nuevo México están en "riesgo alto y extremo" de incendio forestal, según Verisk Analytics Inc. una empresa de análisis de datos y evaluación de riesgos.

La situación se ha vuelto cada vez más tensa, "especialmente en los últimos cinco años", dijo Janet Ruiz, portavoz del Instituto de Información de Seguros, una asociación del sector con sede en Nueva York. "Con el cambio climático, hace más calor, más sequedad y más viento. Cada vez vemos más incendios forestales en zonas donde hay casas... Si una compañía quiere tener menos riesgo en los libros en un determinado estado, no se renovarían las pólizas". Los que pueden mantener su seguro en las zonas de mayor riesgo están pagando ahora más por él.

Como resultado, algunos propietarios de viviendas en Nuevo México han quedado fuera del mercado por completo, mientras que a otros se les niega la cobertura después de décadas de pagar fielmente sus primas.

Durante 44 años, Senaida y Damián Durán, una pareja de más de 70 años, tuvieron un seguro para su casa en el Valle de Mora. "Pero en 2016, recibimos un correo electrónico diciendo que no nos

renovarían", recuerda Senaida que, junto a su marido, se encuentra entre los más de 700 evacuados que se refugian en el campamento de Glorieta. "Fuimos a nuestro agente y lo intentamos una y otra vez, pero no encontré a nadie que nos lo diera porque vivimos demasiado cerca de la montaña".

Ella cree que su casa está a salvo por ahora. Uno de sus yernos, Leonard Maestas, se ha quedado en la zona de evacuación para protegerla. "Está fumigando la casa, la pila de madera, todo lo que puede", dijo Raúl Valdez, otro yer-

no, que acompañó a los Duran a un lugar seguro, junto con su esposa, Yvonne.

Pero los problemas con los seguros ya no se limitan a las zonas rurales remotas. En abril de 2021, Mark Castelin fue informado de que el seguro de su casa en una urbanización cercana al Santa Fe Community College iba a ser revocado.

"Alegaron que Rancho Viejo Sur era adyacente al Bosque Nacional de Santa Fe", dijo. No es así.

Vea Incendios, página 20



State News / Noticias del Estado

North High School Students on Why Denver Needs More Teachers of Color

COLORADO

By Melanie Asmar

North High School senior Martin Castañon grew up in a neighborhood where most people looked like him. But now, he said, white newcomers treat him with irritation, when they were the ones who “came into my neighborhood, tearing my culture away from me.”

North High’s decision not to re-hire teacher Tim Hernández, who taught English, Latinx literature, and a Latinx leadership class, along with leading a student club, feels like yet another blow for the majority-Latino students at a school serving one of Denver’s most gentrified neighborhoods.

“It’s sad. It’s depressing,” Martin said. “It’s like you go from so much color and so much joy to so much depression and darkness. It sucks to get that taken away from you.”

Hernández grew up on Denver’s Northside and began teaching at North High last school year. He was hired again this school year on a one-year contract. When he applied to continue teaching at North

next year, Hernández said he was not rehired.

“We want our teacher back. ... That’s not just a teacher to us. That’s a safe person. ... Him being one of the only Northside Chicanos at North High School, that’s a big support system.”
Nayeli López, North High School Freshman

In a statement, Denver Public Schools did not address why Hernández was not rehired. The statement said the district is committed to recruiting and retaining qualified teachers of color, and it’s up to each school’s personnel committee, which at North includes Principal Scott Wolf, to decide which teachers are hired. If the committee can’t come to consensus, the principal has the final say, according to the teacher’s union contract.

Hernández’s students said it’s been devastating to lose the teacher who taught them about the Chicano movement, Colorado student activists like Los Seis de Boulder, and the West High blowouts of 1969, when Denver students protested racism and discrimination. Hernández kept a refrigerator that students from the club stocked with free groceries. His classroom was decorated with flags and a hand-painted banner that said “casa de la cultura.”

“In the walls of our building, we know our culture is not centered anywhere else,” Hernández said of North High, “but it was in my room.”

District and state data show 75% of Denver students are students of color. But only 29% of teachers are teachers of color. Hispanic or Latino students make up 52% of the district population, but only 19% of Denver teachers are Hispanic or Latino.

“This is bigger and has always been bigger than Mr. Hernández,” said North High freshman Nayeli López, who is part of the club, called SOMOS MECHA. “The reason we talk about him so much is because he’s one of the only



(From left to right) North High School students Nayeli López, Martin Castañon, Daniela Urbina-Valle, and Viridiana Sánchez. / (De izquierda a derecha) Estudiantes de la Secundaria North: Nayeli López, Martin Castañon, Daniela Urbina-Valle y Viridiana Sánchez.

teachers of color at the school. Because retaining teachers of color isn’t just offering them a job, it’s making this a safe place for them.”

Over the past several weeks, North High students have held a sit-in and two walkouts to demand the school rehire Hernández. On May 19, approximately 50 students and supporters marched to the district’s downtown headquarters, where they chanted, “Who do we want? Mr. Hernández! Where do we

want him? At North High!” About 20 people signed up to talk about Hernández and North at Thursday night’s school board meeting.

At the end of the meeting, the board voted unanimously to remove Hernández from the list of teachers being “non-renewed.” Superintendent Alex Marrero said that while that doesn’t mean Hernández will be reinstated at North High, “we will support him on his journey to finding another position within DPS next year.”

Chalkbeat spoke to four students — Nayeli, Martin, senior Daniela Urbina-Valle, and junior Viridiana Sánchez — about Hernández and the need for Denver Public Schools to hire and retain more teachers who are Black, Indigenous, and people of color. Here’s what they said.

What have your experiences been with having BIPOC teachers in school?

Martin: I’ve only had about two teachers, total, of color. ... Mr. Hernández was one of the only teachers that was really true about having Brown pride. It’s kind of unfortunate that we can’t really learn about our culture through teachers. ... Bringing in teachers of color would help us a lot. We can’t find out who we truly are if we don’t know where we came from.

Viridiana: Finally having a teacher that talked exactly like you did, that had a background story exactly like yours, it was eye-opening. It was so refreshing.

Nayeli: I was raised around a community where it was people from the Chicano movement and that community. That’s what I was raised in, but I never heard it in a school setting.

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Los Estudiantes Hablan de por qué Denver Necesita Más Profesores de Color



Foto/Photo: Melanie Asmar / Chalkbeat

Estudiantes de la Secundaria North protestan frente a las oficinas centrales del Distrito de Escuelas Públicas de Denver el 19 de mayo. / North High School students protest in front of Denver Public Schools headquarters on May 19, 2022.

COLORADO

Por Melanie Asmar

Martin Castañón, estudiante de duodécimo grado de la Secundaria North, creció en una comunidad en la que la mayoría de la gente se veía como él. Pero ahora, dice, los nuevos residentes blancos se muestran irritados con él, cuando ellos fueron los que “se mudaron a mi comunidad y me arrancaron la cultura.”

La decisión de la Secundaria North de no renovar el contrato a Tim Hernández, maestro de inglés, Literatura Latinx y una clase de Liderazgo Latinx, y que también dirigía un club de estudiantes, todavía se siente como otro golpe para el estudiantado (en su mayoría de origen Latino) de una escuela situada en una de las comunidades más gentrificadas de Denver.

“Es triste. Es deprimente,” dijo Martin. “Fue como cambiar de muchos colores y alegría a un ambiente de depresión y oscuridad. Es terrible que le quiten eso a uno.”

Hernández creció en el Norte de Denver y comenzó a enseñar en la Secundaria North el pasado año escolar. Fue contratado nuevamente este año con un contrato de un año. Cuando solicitó seguir enseñando en North el próximo año, Hernández dijo que no le renovaron el contrato.

En una declaración, el Distrito de Escuelas Públicas de Denver no dijo por qué no se le renovó el contrato a Hernández. La declaración decía que el distrito está comprometido con reclutar y retener maestros de color calificados, y que la decisión de a quién contratar está de parte del comité de personal de la escuela (que en la Secundaria North incluye al director, Scott Wolf). Si el comité no puede llegar a un consenso, el director tiene la última palabra de conformidad

con el contrato del sindicato de maestros.

Los estudiantes de Hernández dicen que ha sido devastador perder al maestro que les enseñó sobre el movimiento Chicano, sobre estudiantes activistas de Colorado como Los Seis de Boulder, y las marchas en la West High en 1969, cuando los estudiantes de Denver protestaron contra el racismo y la discriminación. Hernández mantuvo un refrigerador que los estudiantes del Club llenaban de despensa para distribuir gratuitamente. Su salón de clases estaba decorado con banderas y un cartel pintado a mano con la frase “casa de la cultura.”

“Sabemos que nuestra cultura no está destacada en ninguna otra de las paredes de nuestro edificio,” dijo Hernández, “pero sí en mi salón de clases.”

Los datos del distrito y el estado muestran que un 75% de los estudiantes de Denver son minorías raciales. Sin embargo, solo un 29% de los maestros son personas de color. Los estudiantes hispanos o latinos representan un 52% del distrito, pero solo un 19% de los maestros de Denver son hispanos o latinos.

“Esto es y siempre ha sido algo más grande que el caso del Sr. Hernández,” dijo Nayeli López, estudiante de noveno grado de la Secundaria North, y que es miembro del club llamado SOMOS MECHA. “La razón por la que hablamos tanto sobre él es que era uno de los pocos maestros de color en la escuela. Retener maestros de color es más que solo ofrecerles empleo, es hacer que la escuela sea un lugar seguro para ellos.”

Durante las últimas semanas, los estudiantes de la Secundaria North han tenido una sentada y dos abandonos del edificio para exigir que la escuela vuelva a contratar a Hernández. El jueves, unos 50 estudiantes y apoyadores marcharon hasta las oficinas centrales del dis-

trito para decir a voces, “¿A quién queremos? ¡Al Sr. Hernández! ¿Dónde? ¡En la Secundaria North!” Aproximadamente 20 personas se apuntaron en una lista para hablar sobre Hernández y la Secundaria North en la reunión de la Junta Escolar el jueves por la noche.

Al terminar la reunión, la junta votó unánimemente que Hernández fuese eliminado de la lista de maestros “sin renovación de contrato.” El superintendente Alex Marrero dijo que aunque eso no significa que Hernández regresará a la Secundaria North, sí significa que “lo apoyaremos en su camino a encontrar otro puesto dentro de DPS el año próximo.”

Chalkbeat habló con cuatro estudiantes — Nayeli, Martin, la estudiante de duodécimo grado Daniela Urbina-Valle y la estudiante de undécimo grado Viridiana Sánchez — sobre Hernández y la necesidad de que el Distrito de Escuelas Públicas de Denver contrate y retenga más maestros de raza negra, indígenas, y de otras minorías raciales (categoría conocida como BIPOC, *Black, Indigenous and People of Color*). Esto es lo que nos dijeron.

¿Cuál ha sido su experiencia en cuanto a tener maestros BIPOC en la escuela?

Martin: En total he tenido dos maestros de color. ... el Sr. Hernández fue uno de los únicos maestros que realmente mostraba orgullo por su raza y cultura. Es lamentable que no podamos aprender sobre nuestra cultura de los maestros. ... Contratar maestros de color nos ayudaría mucho. Nunca sa-

brems quiénes somos en verdad si no aprendemos de dónde venimos.

Viridiana: Finalmente tener un maestro que habla exactamente como tú, que viene de un trasfondo exactamente como el tuyo... fue revelador. Fue algo refrescante.

Nayeli: Yo crecí en una comunidad de personas que fueron parte del movimiento Chicano. Así me crie, pero nunca había escuchado sobre eso en la escuela.

Daniela: Aunque tengamos maestros que se ven como nosotros, la expectativa es que se conformen a un sistema creado por hombres blancos... Muchas veces el hombre blanco piensa que la educación se trata de control, y el Sr. Hernández nos enseñó que eso no es cierto.

¿Qué aprendieron en las clases del Sr. Hernández? ¿Y cómo se sintieron?

Martin: Aprendí quién soy. Aprendí lo que significa ser Chicano. Por ser hijo de padres mexicanos, la palabra Chicano tiene bastante peso. La definición de ellos es completamente diferente a la verdadera. Para ellos, Chicano significa haragán; alguien que vive del sistema. Pero ese no fue el significado original. Chicano se trata del poder latino.

Las primeras semanas del año escolar, [el Sr. Hernández] nos llevó a la *reunión de la West* [Secundaria]. Y no era solo una reunión, fue una celebración de las *protestas de la West*. Lo primero que aprendí del Sr. Hernández sobre la raza latina fue eso.

Nayeli: Yo conocí al Sr. Hernández en la actividad de la Secundaria



“Queremos que nuestro maestro regrese. ... para nosotros no es un simple maestro. Es alguien que nos hace sentir seguros. ... Él, siendo uno de los únicos Chicanos en la Secundaria North, era un excelente sistema de apoyo”.

Nayeli López, Estudiante de la Secundaria North

West. Mi papá [Paul López, *Denver City Clerk* y exmiembro del consejo de la ciudad] es exalumno de la Secundaria West y era uno de los oradores. Yo era la única estudiante pensando, “Uf, soy de la Secundaria North y aquí estoy, en la escuela rival.”

Fue entonces que vi un grupo grande de estudiantes marchando con un letrero que decía “*From North to West, Chicano Power*.” Entonces pensé, “Oh wow, ¡qué cool!” Nunca había escuchado la frase “*Chicano Power*” fuera de mi casa.

Daniela: Mi mamá nació en México y mi papá en Nicaragua, así que soy la primera generación nacida aquí. ... no era normal que yo dijera que soy Chicana porque para ellos, es un término negativo. ... [Hernández] nos enseñó a sentirnos orgullosos mostrándonos la historia. ... no se trata únicamente de César Chávez. No se trata solamente de Dolores Huerta. Es mucho más que esas personas.

Vea **Estudiantes**, página 21

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State News / Noticias del Estado

¡Comunidad, Cultura y Fiesta! A Quixote Nuevo Community Celebration

COLORADO

Celebrate an evening of Hispanic and Latin American arts and culture at the *Quixote Nuevo* community celebration — *¡Comunidad, Cultura y Fiesta!* Ending the 2022 Denver Center for the Performing Arts (DCPA) Theatre Company season with a bash, the free community celebration will bring together dance, live music, and more by fellow Denver community organizations.

The event, held on June 9 from 4:30-7pm in partnership with Colorado Symphony and Arts & Venues, will take place under the glass rooftop of the Denver Performing Arts Complex, (1400 Curtis Street, Denver, CO 80204), before stepping into the fantastical journey of *Quixote Nuevo*.

The event will include: Dance performances by ArtisticO, Live music by Miguel Soldevila, 3D Interactive Sculpture by Artist and Designer, Norberto Mojardin, Travel exhibit by Museo de las Americas, Alebrije art display by the Mexican Cultural Center, Talent curated by our collaborative partner, Colectiva, and local food vendors.



Quixote Nuevo continues through June 12 at the Denver Center for the Performing Arts.

Admission is free. Local food and drinks will be available to purchase.

Guests are invited to also extend their experience with discounted tickets to the June 9 performance of DCPA Theatre Company's *Quixote Nuevo*, tickets to the Friday, June 10 performance of Colorado Symphony's *México en el Corazón*, or the 2022 Latinx Theatre Commons Comedy Carnaval hosted this year at Su Teatro. The 2022 LTC Comedy Carnaval highlights some of the best Latinx comedic talent in the nation. Attendees will have the

opportunity to experience three full-length play readings, stand-up and solo performances, and three sketch comedy performances.

"I am thrilled that the DCPA has formed a beautiful collaboration with our community partners to provide a space for the community to come together and celebrate," said DCPA Director of Community Engagement Jesús Quintana Martínez. "I believe in the saying, 'La unión hace la fuerza' or 'strength through unity,' and this event is a living example of what we can do when we come together. *¡Comuni-*

dad, Cultura y Fiesta! would not be possible without our vibrant Colorado community!"

Quixote Nuevo is set in the fictional modern-day Texas border town of La Plancha, Quixote and his luckless but trusty sidekick, Sancho, embark on a fantastical quest in search of long-lost love. Infused with imagination, comedy, and Tejano music, *Quixote Nuevo* reveals the joys and perils of facing down Death and becoming the hero of your own story. *Quixote Nuevo*, by playwright Octavio Solís and directed by Lisa Portes.

"The world that playwright Octavio Solís has created in *Quixote Nuevo* takes the spirit of the classic *Don Quixote*, and creates a new journey based in La Pancho, TX

filled with comedy, Tejano music, and the quest for love," said DCPA Theatre Company Artistic Director Chris Coleman. "I am thrilled that we are wrapping up the 2022 Theatre Company season with the perfect production to celebrate the return of theatre."

In service and celebration of Tejano culture and Cervantes' classic tale of *Don Quixote*, audiences can expect to hear lots of music and Spanish language throughout the performance.

Quixote Nuevo continues through June 12 at the DCPA's Wolf Theater. Tickets for *Quixote Nuevo* may be purchased [here](#).

For More Colorado News:
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Photo: Courtesy DCPA

Groups Working Together to Support Youth Mental Health

COLORADO

Colorado Attorney General Phil Weiser joined Golden High School and Sources of Strength on May 24, to applaud ongoing work at the school to support students' mental health, and to urge continued statewide collaboration to address mental health concerns. Youth mental health is a top priority for the Attorney General's Office, which released a report today demonstrating how this collaboration is supporting youth mental health across Colorado and calling for continued investment in the state's young people.

Since 2018, the Department of Law has provided almost \$1 million for Sources of Strength via a partnership with the Colorado Office of Suicide Prevention. Sources of Strength aims to prevent suicide by increasing help-seeking behaviors and promoting connections between peers and caring adults. The department also recently collaborated with Rocky Mountain Health Plans to provide an additional \$500,000 grant to

the program through the Healthy Youth/Strong Colorado Fund. The fund allocated a total of \$5 million to support youth programs throughout the state.



"It's easy to feel misunderstood and feel like you don't have anyone who knows what you're going through, so it's important to know you're not—and we say this all the time—you're not alone here."

Soli Ficco, Student, Sources of Strength at Golden High School

The 2022 Youth Mental Health Report released on May 24, highlights the work of some of those programs, which play a pivotal role in empowering teens across

See [Health](#) on page 21



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Mentally Ill Coloradans Await Care in Jail for Months



Rep. Shane Sandridge, R-Colorado Springs, listens as Rep. Judy Amabile, D-Boulder, speaks on the House floor April 19, 2022.

COLORADO

By Faith Miller

Ever since state Rep. Judy Amabile first experienced how difficult it was to find care for someone with serious mental health needs, she's been a fierce advocate for expanding access to treatment.

Amabile's adult son began struggling with schizoaffective disorder — which can include symptoms of schizophrenia, like hallucinations and delusions, and symptoms of bipolar disorder, like mania and depression — 12 years ago. His parents struggled for years to find him the long-term care he needed.

"What he needed was never available to him, at least that we could figure out," Amabile said in a recent interview. "He did have several of these short-term hospital stays, and we would be begging, 'Please don't let him go. He's not ready to go.' ... The longest hospital stay he ever had was six days, and that was after a very tumultuous series of events — he tried to buy a gun to kill himself, he brandished a knife."

After bouts of homelessness and encounters with law enforcement, Amabile's son now has stable housing and employment, she said. But she hopes legislation she sponsored this year will benefit other Coloradans with complex mental health and substance use-related needs.

House Bill 22-1303 — also sponsored by Reps. Shane Sandridge, a Colorado Springs Republican, along with Sens. Faith Winter, a Westminster Democrat, and Jim Smallwood, a Republican from Parker — will use about \$17 million in federal COVID-19 relief money to add 16 beds for people ac-

cused of committing crimes who have been deemed incompetent to stand trial. Those beds would be located at the Colorado Mental Health Institute at Fort Logan. The bill would also provide \$37 million in federal funding to add 125 beds at residential facilities throughout the state for people needing long-term supportive services.

Such "beds" are more than just a frame and mattress — they represent the cost of housing and treating people with a complex array of mental health disorders, many of whom have limited health insurance coverage or none at all.

HB-1303 passed the state Legislature in the last, harried days of the 2022 session, and Gov. Jared Polis added his signature last week. It will initially pay for the new treatment beds using federal COVID-19 relief money Colorado received through the American Rescue Plan Act, which Congress passed in spring of last year.

Lawmakers set aside \$400 million of those federal funds for behavioral health programs, since the state has seen record numbers of overdose deaths and rising mental health concerns since the pandemic began in 2020. While these problems aren't new to Colorado — a state that Mental Health America ranked in last place overall for adult mental health — lawmakers are hoping to leverage the pandemic relief money to turn the tide in this escalating crisis.

"It was a marathon to get the powers that be to agree to it," Amabile told *Colorado Newsline* in April. "There were a lot of competing interests for the money." Another obstacle, she said, was the fact that the federal relief money was one-time spending. After fiscal year 2023-2024, the state will be on the hook for the new behavioral health investments.

Competency restoration backlog

At the outset, the 16 new beds at Fort Logan included in HB-1303 will be specifically designated for so-called civil commitments of people involved in the criminal justice system.

"Many people with serious mental illness are not capable of assisting their own defense, and so they get sent to the state hospital, where they try to restore people to competency," Amabile explained. The suspect in a mass shooting last year at a Boulder King Soopers, who pled guilty by reason of insanity, is one high-profile example, but people can be ordered to undergo competency restoration for much less serious crimes.

Once the state's backlog of competency services is eliminated, the 16 beds can be used for civil patients, who are not necessarily facing criminal charges but still urgently need treatment. But the backlog is severe.

People ordered to undergo competency restoration before standing trial faced an average wait time of 88.8 days as of March, according to data provided by Madlynn Ruble, deputy director of communications for the Colorado Department of Human Services. That's an increase from 11.9 days in March 2021 and 44.7 days in March 2020.

There were 363 people on the wait list as of March 2022, compared with 142 in March 2021 and 66 in March 2020, Ruble said in an email. Amabile said she's heard of people having to wait more than a year to receive court-ordered competency restoration services.

In the 2022-2023 fiscal year, which begins July 1, the state is expecting to pay \$12 million in fines and fees associated with failing to meet court-ordered deadlines for such competency restoration services. In 2011, Disability Law Colorado sued the state over its long wait times for mental health treatment, and DHS is still accruing fines required under a consent decree the parties reached in 2018. Under the consent decree, DHS is supposed to get people into treatment within seven to 21 days, and the state is fined up to \$500 per person per day it does not meet that deadline.

Most of the beds for competency restoration are currently located at the Colorado Mental Health Institute at Pueblo. At full capacity, the Pueblo facility has space for 517 people, but just 342 clients were admitted as of late April 2022.

Staffing shortages and a construction project that has closed some wings of the facility have kept it from operating at full capacity, Ruble told *Newsline*.

Other beds for competency restoration are provided through jail-based programs including the Restoring Individuals Safely and Effectively (RISE) Program in Boulder and Arapahoe counties. There were 53 clients at the RISE Program in Arapahoe County and 18 at the program in Boulder County as of late April. Nine clients were admitted at the Denver County Jail's program.

DHS also contracts with two private hospitals to provide competency restoration. As of late April, Peak View Behavioral Health in Colorado Springs had 26 clients admitted and Denver Health had 28 clients admitted.

In addition to HB-1303's 16 beds at Fort Logan, which are being paid for with COVID-19 relief money, lawmakers approved funding in the state budget for another 44 beds for competency restoration services, also at Fort Logan.

The 44 beds in the state budget are expected to come with an annual price tag of \$11.7 million,



"Because of stigma with mental health, we allow inhumane practices, inhumane policies, and an anemic level of care in facilities to be our shame in Colorado."

Sylvia Tawse

plus salary and benefits for 96 full-time state workers. Unlike the beds provided in HB-1303, they are being paid for with money from the state's general fund, which is filled mostly with revenue from income and sales taxes.

All told, the state will theoretically be able to serve many more people undergoing court-ordered treatment — if it can hire enough nurses and other medical staff amid a dire shortage of health care workers. A separate bill could help with that by investing about \$72 million in federal relief money into expanding the state's mental health workforce.

Another bill Amabile sponsored this year provides \$29 million of

See [Care](#) on page 22

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State News / Noticias del Estado

El Puente Program Guides Students Through Research Process

NEW MEXICO

By Mary Beth King

Students don't come to The University of New México (UNM) with the innate knowledge of how to conduct research. The idea of choosing a topic and carrying it through to completion can be daunting and some students are ready to give up before they even try.

As one student noted in a recent presentation, "...For years, I was convinced that I would not be able to do research if I was not ready to do things like slice rat brains or mess with Petri dishes... I thought that I just was not research-minded."

UNM's El Puente Research Fellowship, a program under El Centro de la Raza, supports and promotes students in multiple academic areas, offering them the opportunity to increase their understanding and experience of academic research, and gain the knowledge and tools necessary to begin the research process, develop a research proposal, and prepare for graduate school and the professional world.

The application process for El Puente is now under way. The application process deadline May 31.

“I think students are afraid to apply because they don't have research experience but that's the point of El Puente. It's a bridge.”
Alejandro Mendiaz-Rivera, El Centro de la Raza

El Puente Research Fellowship started as a service internship in the early 2000's but evolved in 2014 to become the undergraduate research focused program it is today, explained program director Alejandro Mendiaz-Rivera. He is an alumnus of the program when it was a service-based internship. His own experience in this program led him to pursue a double major in Latin American Studies and Spanish during his undergraduate career and to become a Student Affairs practitioner focused on advancing educational opportunities for minoritized students.

"We received feedback from our students who were struggling to be admitted into research programs such as McNair or encountering challenges in applying to graduate school, whether here at UNM or elsewhere... We teach the basics of academic research and graduate and professional schools' application because we're trying to bridge students into continuing opportunities and into graduate and professional schools," Mendiaz-Rivera explained, noting that El Puente means "The Bridge."

To be in the program, students must be a member of an underrepresented ethnic group in higher education, a first-generation college student, or qualify as low-income.

"Because of the demographics of the university and the fact that we are housed under El Centro de la Raza, the majority of the applicants identify as Hispanic or Latinx, but I also work with students who don't identify that way," Mendiaz-Rivera said, adding, "El Puente fosters a unique intellectual community premised on incubating the brilliance of Raza and historically underrepresented students."



El Puente Research Fellowship is a program under El Centro de la Raza at The University of New México. / El Puente Research Fellowship es un programa del Centro de la Raza de la Universidad de Nuevo México.

El Puente is funded by student fees instead of grants so is not bound by some of the restrictions placed on similar programs. The program is limited to usually around 20 undergraduates, but due to increased funding for next school year will accommodate 24. El Puente students are spread across a variety of disciplines and not limited to a certain subset of majors like most research programs.

"I can work with any major as long as they're interested in doing research and learning about graduate and professional school," said Mendiaz-Rivera.

Research interests are diverse and include Social Media, the COVID-19 Pandemic and Fashion Consumption; Feminist Manifestations in Left-Wing Extremist Groups; Microplastics in Terrestrial Environments and the Impacts on Vegetation Growth; and Gender Roles, U.S. Legislation, and Socio-emotional Development in Relation to Dress Code Policies.

One student, who researched how New México can increase the rate of development in renewable energy, sits on the PNM Youth Advisory Committee.

See Puente on page 24

REPORT ILLEGAL FIREWORKS

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El Puente Guía a los Estudiantes en el Proceso de Investigación

NEW MEXICO

Por Mary Beth King

Los estudiantes no llegan a la Universidad de Nuevo México (UNM) con el conocimiento innato de cómo realizar una investigación. La idea de elegir un tema y llevarlo a cabo puede ser desalentadora y algunos estudiantes están dispuestos a abandonar antes de intentarlo.

Como señaló un estudiante en una presentación reciente, "...Durante años, estuve convencido de que no sería capaz de hacer investigación si no estaba preparado para hacer cosas como cortar cerebros de rata o meterse con placas de Petri... Pensé que simplemente no tenía mentalidad de investigador".

La beca de investigación El Puente de la UNM, un programa dependiente de El Centro de la Raza, apoya y promueve a los estudiantes en múltiples áreas académicas, ofreciéndoles la oportunidad de aumentar su comprensión y experiencia de la investigación académica, y obtener el cono-



El director del programa del El Puente, Alejandro Mendiaz-Rivera. / El Puente's program director, Alejandro Mendiaz-Rivera.

cimiento y las herramientas necesarias para comenzar el proceso de investigación, desarrollar una propuesta de investigación y prepararse para la escuela de posgrado y el mundo profesional.

El proceso de solicitud para El Puente ya está en marcha. El proceso de solicitud tiene como fecha límite el 31 de mayo.

Vea Puente/Esp, página 25

144,377 New Mexicans, 38,749 children, Threatened by Oil and Gas Pollution

NEW MEXICO

A new geospatial analysis released by Earthworks this week shows 144,377 New Mexicans including 38,749 children, reside near or attend schools or daycares within a ½ mile threat radius of active oil and gas operations. In the



“The rash of dots on this map equates to 38,749 of our New México kids living within a half mile of an oil and gas facility in counties that get F grades for air quality.”

Camilla Feibelman,
Sierra Club/Rio Grande
Chapter

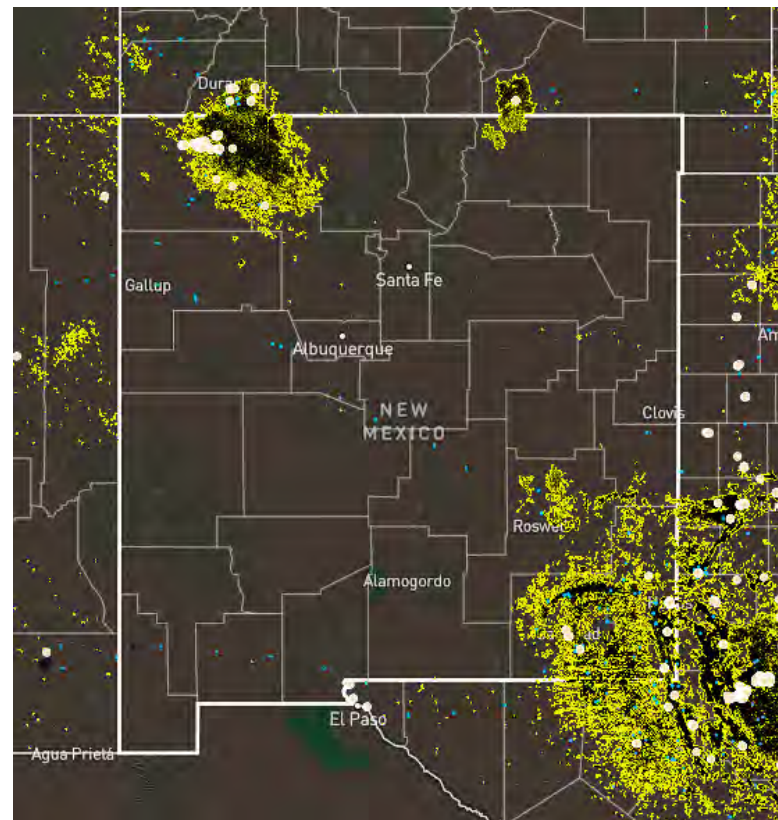
San Juan Basin nearly 80% of the population lives within this radius. In the NM Permian Basin the map shows a nearly 40% increase in EDDY County alone of people living within the threat radius since 2017. This analysis comes as the U.S. Environmental Protec-

tion Agency (EPA) works to finalize their widely supported proposed safeguards to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and associated toxic air pollution from new and existing oil and gas facilities and as they prepare to introduce a supplemental rule to address routine flaring and smaller leak-prone wells. New México's recently finalized methane and ozone precursor rules set a strong floor for federal rules that would protect all communities like those in Texas, where regulations are limited, and along its border in New México. “Looking at this map as a front-line community member makes my stomach drop,” said Kayley Shoup, Community Organizer with Citizens Caring for the Future based in Carlsbad. “In Southeast New México many people along with healthcare professionals are unaware of the health risks that are associated with living near an oil & gas site which makes for a harrowing reality on the ground. While the threat map is a great tool for everyday citizens to utilize, it also highlights why leaders at every level must do more to not only protect frontline community members but also to enact a man-

aged decline of production. The number of people living in threat zones has substantially increased in the past five years. This is unacceptable at a time when natural disasters are ravaging our state, and everyday we are learning more about the substantial health risks associated with oil & gas production.”

“This map shows that In San Juan County, more than half of the Native population lives within a half-mile of an oil and gas production site. That's why we asked the New Mexico Environmental Improvement Board to for strict air pollution regulations for oil and gas facilities, including more robust protections for people who live near oil and gas wells and we want to see the same from the EPA,” said Joseph Hernández, Diné Energy Organizer with NAVAEP.

“The rash of dots on this map equates to 38,749 of our New México kids living within a half mile of an oil and gas facility in counties that get F grades for air quality. That equates to worse asthma, lost days at school, and lost days of work for parents. With production booming in the Perm-



ian and tribal communities at risk in the San Juan Basin, strong enforcement of our state rules is more urgent than ever, and the speedy delivery of even stronger federal rules is essential,” said Camilla Feibelman, Sierra Club - Rio Grande Chapter Director.

“This map highlights why EPA should build from the strong example of states like New México, where Gov. Lujan Grisham has established comprehensive oil and gas rules,” said Jon Goldstein, Se-

See **Pollution** on page 23

LGBTQ+ Advocates Endorse NM Primary Candidates

NEW MEXICO

By Roz Brown

While lawmakers in many states have introduced legislation to roll back LGBTQ+ rights within their borders, New Mexico is not one of them, and advocates want to keep it that way. Equality New Mexico has released its preferred list of candidates for the June 7 primary election. **Equality Champions:** State Auditor: Zack Quintero; Attorney General: Brian Colón; State Representative District 19: Janelle Anyanonu; State Representative District 42: Kristina Ortiz; State Representative District 46: Andrea Romero

Endorsed Candidates: Bernalillo County Sheriff: John Allen; State Representative District 17: Darrell Deaguerro; State Representative District 26: Eleanor Chavez; State Representative District 38: Tara Jaramillo; State Representative District 39: Karen Whitlock; State Representative District 70: Anita Gonzales; State Treasurer: Heather Benavidez; State Representative District 41: Susan Herrera.

Marshall Martínez, executive director of the group, said people running for office are asked to complete an extensive questionnaire before receiving an endorsement. And with more and more attacks on gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender people, Martínez argued complacency is not an option. “And we had some of those attacks in our session,” Martínez recounted. “We defeated them, but we have to keep working to keep electing the leaders that are going to defend us from those attacks when they come.” New México is one of eight states to pass pro-equality measures in the past few years. It is also part of a coalition of 18 states announcing plans to introduce legislation they say will be needed to protect transgender kids from civil and criminal penalties when seeking gender-affirming care. Based on a leaked draft opinion, the U.S. Supreme Court is poised to overturn the landmark Roe v. Wade decision legalizing abortion. Martínez sees it as another reason

See **Endorsements** on page 23

Disaster Unemployment Assistance opens for New Mexicans affected by wildfires

Individuals whose employment or self-employment was lost or interrupted as a direct result of wildfires can now apply for Disaster Unemployment Assistance.

The deadline to apply is June 15, 2022.

For more information:

www.dws.state.nm.us/DUA

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National News/Noticias Nacionales

After Kids Killed in Texas, Dems Declare 'Pass Gun Safety Legislation Now'

By Jessica Corbett

Progressives in Congress responded to a deadly mass shooting at a Texas elementary school on Tuesday with demands for swift action to reduce gun violence.

The massacre at Robb Elementary School in Uvalde left at least 18 children and three adults dead—and came just 10 days after a mass shooting at a supermarket in Buffalo sparked similar calls for congressional action.

"I am horrified by news of another mass shooting and my heart breaks for the families of the young children and teacher killed in Uvalde. Congress has a moral responsibility to end gun violence now. To those who refuse to act, there are no excuses. Only complicity and shame," said Sen. Ed Markey (D-Mass.).

"Abolish the filibuster and pass gun safety legislation now," added Markey. The filibuster has been the biggest barrier to getting bills through the evenly split Senate without GOP support, but a few right-wing Democrats have joined with Republicans to defend it, even when faced with crises and tragedies.

Referencing the initial death toll, Rep. Ro Khanna (D-Calif.) tweeted: "Fourteen little kids, dead. When are we going to wake up as a country? Abolish the filibuster. Pass gun safety legislation, now. This needs to stop. We can never allow this to happen again."

Sen. Jeff Merkley (D-Ore.) also took aim at the filibuster:

Meanwhile, in the chamber, Sen. Chris Murphy (D-Conn.)—who was in the House for the 2012 Sandy Hook shooting—pleaded with lawmakers to act.

"I am here on this floor to beg, to literally get down on my hands and knees and beg my colleagues: Find a path forward here," Murphy said. "Work with us to find a way to pass laws that make this less likely."

"I understand my Republican colleagues will not agree to everything that I may support but there is a common denominator that we can find," he continued. "There is a place where we can achieve agreement—that may not guarantee that America never, ever again sees a mass shooting... but by doing something, we at least stop sending this quiet message of endorsement to these killers whose brains are breaking, who see the highest levels of government doing nothing, shooting after shooting."

Others called out right-wing lawmakers who have stood in the way of federal gun safety legislation.

"The only adjectives left to describe yet another school shooting are 'sick' and 'tired' of conservative extremists blocking common-sense steps to reduce the risk of these atrocities ripping away the lives of children and leaving their families to grieve their devastating losses," said Sen. Ron Wyden (D-Ore.).

Congresswoman Marie Newman (D-Ill.) fumed that "I simply don't have words for this horror. I'm furious we live in a nation that values 'freedom' over innocent Americans—including children—being gunned down and murdered. When will the Republican Party stop holding our nation hostage and let us pass gun safety legislation!?"

"How the hell can any @GOP member look at this and still believe there is nothing Congress can do to end these school shootings?" she tweeted. "I'm praying for the victims and families but that is not nearly enough—we need real action RIGHT NOW!"

Rep. Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez (D-N.Y.) shared MSNBC executive producer Kyle Griffin's tweet noting that GOP Texas Gov. Greg Abbott, Sen. Ted Cruz (R-Texas), and former President Donald Trump are scheduled to speak at the annual meeting of the National Rifle Association (NRA) that is set to kick off Friday in Houston, which "is only a few hundred miles away from Uvalde."

In a swipe at lawmakers who attack reproductive rights, Ocasio-Cortez charged that "there is no such thing as being 'pro-life' while supporting laws that let children be shot in their schools, elders in grocery stores, worshippers in their houses of faith, survivors by abusers, or anyone in a crowded place. It is an idolatry of violence. And it must end."

Some progressive lawmakers drew on their own experiences as parents and argued that kids nationwide deserve better. Rep. Ilhan Omar (D-Minn.) declared that "as a parent of an elementary school student, the pain and anger is unbearable. Pass gun safety legislation now."

Rep. Rashida Tlaib similarly said that "as a mom, I cannot fully express how devastating it is to hear that 14 kids and their teacher were murdered in their classroom. How many more people have to die before our country takes on gun violence?"

Congressional Progressive Caucus Chair Pramila Jayapal (D-Wash.) declared: "Our communities de-

serve better. Our children deserve better."

Rep. Mondaire Jones (D-N.Y.) agreed, calling it "infuriating and shameful that with each passing day we lose more kids to senseless acts of gun violence like this," and asserting that "this isn't the America our children deserve."

Impassioned calls for action also came from outside of Congress. American Federation of Teachers president Randi Weingarten said that "only in America do people go grocery shopping and get mowed down by a shooter with hate in his heart; only in this country are parents not assured that their kids will be safe at school."

"Gun violence is a cancer, and it's one that none of us should tolerate for one single moment longer," she added. "We have made a choice to let this continue, and we can make a choice to finally do something—do anything—to put a stop to this madness."

Amnesty International USA's campaign manager for ending gun violence, Ernest Coverson, declared that "thoughts and prayers are not enough. Cliches about lives being changed forever are not enough. We are disgusted and we are outraged."

"While details are still to be confirmed, this latest tragedy again underscores how U.S. government officials have allowed gun violence to become a human rights crisis," Coverson continued. It is unacceptable and must end."

"We reiterate our long-standing demand for comprehensive, common-sense, human rights-based gun safety reform at the state, local, and federal levels, without further excuses or delay," he said. "We stand with victims' families and survivors, and join our partners in the gun violence prevention community in demanding action."

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Jessica Corbett is a staff writer for Common Dreams. This article is republished from Common Dreams under a Creative Commons license.

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comenzando con el propio ex-presidente Donald Trump, quienes promueven, por ejemplo, la idea de que la frontera sur con México está "fuera de control" y que estamos siendo "invadidos" por indocumentados. De hecho, el manifiesto de Payton Gendron, el individuo de 18 años que perpetró la matanza en Buffalo, hace referencia a una "invasión" sin precedentes, con lo que busca justificar sus deleznable actos.

Pero racista al fin y al cabo, su odio por los afroamericanos lo llevó a escoger un supermercado en una zona de esa comunidad para llevar a cabo la matanza, pues latinos, afroamericanos, musulmanes, asiáticos o judíos, todos son blanco del odio y del prejuicio que mueve a estos individuos. Incluso lo son otros anglosajones que no compartan sus ideas, como el caso de Charlottesville, Virginia, donde otro desequilibrado embis-

tió con su auto a una contramanifestación que repudiaba el mensaje racista del evento, matando a una joven anglosajona.

En 2019, en El Paso, Texas, otro supremacista blanco, Patrick Crusius, atacó a tiros un Walmart matando a 23 personas e hiriendo a otras 23 en su mayoría hispanos. Y ha habido ataques contra sinagogas, iglesias afroamericanas, mezquitas, etc., porque el odio de estos individuos es contra cualquier minoría.

La teoría del "gran reemplazo" de anglosajones por parte de las minorías ha pasado de grupos extremistas y supremacistas blancos a ser normalizada por presentadores de televisión conservadores, como es el caso de Tucker Carlson, en Fox News, y de políticos republicanos que le han dado su visto bueno a un discurso racista, si eso supone movilizar a las huestes que los colocan en el poder.

Porque lo triste de esta situación es que un sector de la población avala este discurso racista y favorece con su voto a estas figuras, tal y como lo vimos con Trump en su triunfo de 2016. Tal y como lo veremos en futuros comicios. Hay una audiencia receptiva y los políticos lo saben. Pero cuando alguien interpreta la retórica literalmente y culmina en violencia, entonces esos mismos políticos se lavan las manos de cualquier responsabilidad.

Lo mismo ocurrió con el ataque al Capitolio federal el 6 de enero de 2021, cuando una turba enarde-

cida pro Trump intentó evitar que se certificara el triunfo de Biden. Trump y su gente atizaron a una multitud convencida de que su violencia estaba justificada porque le habían "robado" la elección a su máximo líder. Y la violencia terminó en muertes.

Pero la incomodidad de los nacionalistas blancos es un signo de su propia decadencia, moral, histórica y filosóficamente hablando. En tanto, mientras de manera errónea dicen que la gente de color está tratando de "reemplazarlos" —como si la demografía fuera solo una invención mágica

o un mito—, ellos están reaccionando de forma violenta y, al mismo tiempo, están atacando a las minorías, las están rechazando y, lo que es más grave, las están matando.

Pues sucede que la retórica racista, tarde o temprano, siempre generará violencia y muerte.

Maribel Hastings es Asesora Ejecutiva de América's Voice. David Torres es Asesor en Español de América's Voice.

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Kids

which would guarantee multi-year continuous Medi-Cal coverage for kids aged 0-to-5 years. The Senate has included the bill in their list of budget priorities now under negotiation with the Assembly.

"The opposition to the bill comes from people who believe poverty is a personal responsibility, and that there should be steps for people to prove their eligibility for these programs," added Alvarez. "Some people are concerned with the cost of programs more broadly."

At the federal level, the expiration of the PHE will mean 80 million people—including 37 million children—will need to have their eligibility verified, said Joan Alker, healthcare research professor and executive director at the Georgetown University Center for Children and Families.

"Families could lose coverage as they're not going to be eligible if their income has gone up a little bit. Adults may be eligible for subsidized marketplace coverage and children may be eligible for CHIP," explained Alker. "In some states like California, Medicaid and CHIP are all in one program now. But in Texas, Georgia and Florida, they're not."

States will have 12 months to verify eligibility once the PHE expires. States can also reject the extra funding, while Congress could act to lift the Medicaid continuous coverage protection on a certain date. The Biden administration said it would give states 60 days advance notice if they plan to lift the

PHE.

"It's not that easy to enroll in Marketplace coverage, particularly for families with limited English proficiency. I worry greatly that these are the kinds of families that we're going to lose during this process. We're going to need a lot of community support to educate folks and help them through this transition," said Alker.

Update contact info

Healthcare advocates are encouraging families to take a simple step: update their contact information.

"It is critical because the counties who are beneficiaries (of the Medicaid program) usually contact families every year through this renewal redetermination process," explained Yingjia Huang, assistant deputy director at the DHCS.

In April, the department rolled out an initiative called 'DHCS coverage ambassadors' to encourage community based organizations and advocates to spread the word through social media messages, flyers and direct calls in 90 languages to encourage families to update their addresses and phone numbers. Huang urged families to reach out to their counties via phone or by visiting mybenefitscalwin.org or coveredca.com.

Jenny Manrique is a Reporter with Ethnic Media Services. Reproduced with permission by Ethnic Media Services.

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Think about it: if Adam Lanza had murdered those kids at Sandy Hook by mowing them down in the street with his mom's SUV, their families would have gotten \$1 million each from Geico (for example). But because he killed them with a gun, they got nothing; even survivors of mass shootings and "accidents" get nothing for medical bills.

The only city in America who's taken a cue from that century of insurance experience is San Jose, California which in 2021 put a liability insurance requirement into place for all gun owners in the city.

If you've committed gun-related crimes or your guns have killed people in the past, the "free mar-

ket" for insurance will make it very expensive to own a gun; if you're a gun owner who keeps your weapons in a gun safe and uses trigger guards, your rates will be nominal.

One of the main reasons fewer children are dying in car accidents now than a decade or two ago is that the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) has been compiling statistics for decades and has repeatedly identified safety flaws in particular vehicles or the way they're used.

Gun safety advocates have, for years, called for a federal agency to compile gun injury and death statistics, but a bought-off member of Congress, Arkansas Repub-

lican Jay Dickey, attached the notorious "Dickey Amendment" to a must-pass omnibus spending bill in 1996.

In response to a growing number of research papers in the 1980s and early 1990s calling gun deaths a national health crisis and demanding federally funded science on the issue, his NRA-sponsored amendment banned any federal dollars from being used to research gun injuries or deaths in the US.

As The New England Journal of Medicine noted: "Although substantial federal funding has been devoted to research on motor vehicle crashes, the firearm industry and gun-rights organizations, led by the National Rifle Association (NRA), have been effective at keeping federal dollars from financing firearm-related research."

Republicans in Congress continue to attach the Dickey Amendment to every major omnibus spending bill and refuse to vote for any that doesn't contain it. If anybody is "grooming" children toward dangerous behavior, it's Republicans proudly grooming their own kids to be future school shooters.

There's also the problem of the simple proliferation of guns, and the fact that more and more of them are semi-automatic weapons of war rather than simple revolvers or sport-shooting guns and rifles.

In 2010, a bit fewer than 10 million guns were sold in the US. Just the one year of 2020 saw that number more than double to nearly 22 million guns sold in just a 12-month period; 2021 added another 19 million guns to America's homes.

It doesn't take a rocket scientist to figure out that the more guns there are — particularly lacking any incentives to secure them safely — the more gun deaths (accidental, homicide, suicide) there will be.

There are now more guns in America than there are people, a bizarre situation that no other developed country in the world experiences. Literally none.

The average of all countries in the world is 9.86 guns per 100 civilians. The United States is highest in the world at 120.5 guns per 100 people. Yemen, which is in the middle of a war with Saudi Arabia and dealing with an internal insurgency, comes in second at 52.8. No other nation is even close; even Afghanistan and Iraq average around 20 deadly weapons in the hands of every hundred people.

While President Biden has signed an executive order banning the scourge of untraceable "ghost guns" and put gun safety in his last State of the Union speech, there is so much more to do.

Earlier this year a group of young activists including mass shooting survivor and March For Our Lives leader David Hogg covered the front of Senator Chuck Schumer's office with body bags because of his unwillingness to bring gun control legislation to the floor of the Senate during this election year.

Meanwhile, the NRA, still flush with an infusion of cash from Russia, has succeeded in lobbying 25 states to allow anybody to carry a concealed gun with no back-

ground checks, no training, and no permit, regardless of their criminal or violent history.

America is neither poor nor stupid. We figured out how cars were killing people and put an end to most avoidable automobile deaths using a combination of commonsense laws (like mandatory licensure and insurance) and safety measures (seatbelts, car-seats, padded dashes, anti-lock brakes, etc.).

The problem is that the GOP, their newfound concern for "the children" notwithstanding, does everything they can to block any reasonable solutions to the problem of gun violence and deaths in America, particularly among our kids.

We have both the technology and the resources to stop mass shootings and deal with childhood injuries and deaths from the only product sold in America that is specifically designed to kill human beings.

We must vote out the Republicans taking money from and embracing this death-dealing industry so America can put these reasonable steps — that have worked so well in other development nations — into place here.

Thom Hartmann is a talk-show host and author. This oped is republished from Common Dreams under a Creative Commons license CC BY-NC-ND 3.0.

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Ursula von Rydingsvard

El contorno del sentimiento

30 DE ABRIL - 11 DE SEPT. DE 2022



Ursula von Rydingsvard, Terror de hilo, cedro y grafito, 2016, 269 x 256 x 33 centímetros. Artwork © Ursula von Rydingsvard. Foto de Jerry L. Thompson, cortesía de Ursula von Rydingsvard y la Galerie Lelong & Co., Nueva York. Ursula von Rydingsvard: el contorno del sentimiento está organizado por The Fabric Workshop and Museum, Filadelfia.

Viva la experiencia de una colección grande de esculturas de cedro y obras de papel en exposición en el Centro Freyer – Newman.

Niños

verifique su elegibilidad, dijo Joan Alker, profesora de investigación en salud y directora ejecutiva del Centro para Niños y Familias de la Universidad de Georgetown.

"Las familias podrían perder la cobertura, ya que no van a ser elegibles si sus ingresos han subido un poco. Los adultos pueden ser elegibles para la cobertura subvencionada del mercado y los niños pueden ser elegibles para el CHIP", explicó Alker. "En algunos estados como California, Medicaid y CHIP están ahora en un solo programa. Pero en Texas, Georgia y Florida, no lo están".

Los estados tendrán 12 meses para verificar la elegibilidad una vez que el PHE expire. Los estados también pueden rechazar la financiación extra, mientras que el Congreso podría actuar para levantar la protección de cobertura continua de Medicaid en una fecha determinada. El gobierno de Biden dijo que

avisaría a los estados con 60 días de antelación si planean levantar el PHE.

"No es tan fácil inscribirse en la cobertura del Mercado, especialmente para las familias con un dominio limitado del inglés. Me preocupa mucho que este sea el tipo de familias que vamos a perder durante este proceso. Vamos a necesitar mucho apoyo de la comunidad para educar a la gente y ayudarles en esta transición", dijo Alker.

Actualizar información de contacto

Los defensores de la atención médica animan a las familias a dar un paso simple: actualizar su información de contacto.

"Es fundamental porque los condados que son beneficiarios (del programa Medicaid) generalmente se comunican con las familias todos los años a través del

proceso de redeterminación de renovación", explicó Yingjia Huang, subdirectora adjunta del DHCS.

En abril, el Departamento lanzó una iniciativa llamada "embajadores de cobertura del DHCS" para alentar a las organizaciones y defensores comunitarios a correr la voz a través de mensajes en las redes sociales, folletos y llamadas en 90 idiomas además del inglés, para que las familias actualicen sus direcciones y números de teléfono.

Huang instó a las familias a comunicarse con sus condados por teléfono o a través de las páginas mybenefitscalwin.org o coveredca.com.

Jenny Manrique es Reportera de Ethnic Media Services. Reproducido con permiso de Ethnic Media Services.

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Students

Daniela: Even when we do have these teachers that look like us, they are expected to conform to a system that was made by a white man. ... A lot of times the white man thinks education is about control, and Mr. Hernández taught us all that that's not true.



"I've only had about two teachers, total, of color. ... Mr. Hernández was one of the only teachers that was really true about having Brown pride."

Martin Castañon, North High School Senior

What did you learn in Mr. Hernández's classes? And how did you feel?

Martin: I learned who I was. I learned what it meant to be Chicano. Coming from straight-up Mexican parents, the term Chicano isn't really taken lightly. It's a completely different definition from what it actually is. To them, Chicano is lazy, someone who lives off the system. That's not what it was intended to be. Chicano is about Brown power.

The first few weeks of school, [Mr. Hernández] took us to the reunion of West [High School]. That's not only what it was, it was a celebration from the West blowouts that happened. That was the first thing I learned about Brown people were those things from Mr. Hernández.

Nayeli: I actually met Mr. Hernández at the West High event. My dad [Denver City Clerk and former city council member Paul López] was an alumni at West High School

and he had to speak there. I was the only kid who was like, "Dang, I'm from North and I'm at my rival school."

That's when I saw a big group of students marching in with a sign that said, "From North to West, Chicano Power." And right there, I was like, "Oh my God, how cool is that?" I'd never heard the words "Chicano power" outside of my home.

Daniela: My mom was born in México and my dad was born in Nicaragua so I'm a first-generation child. ... It was not normal for me to say I was Chicana because that's wrong in their eyes. ... [Hernández] taught us to be proud by showing us the history. ... It's not just César Chávez. It's not just Dolores Huerta. It's more than just those people.

Viridiana: I met Mr. Hernández at the beginning of the year. ... I remember telling him how much I hated being in AP Language because I didn't connect with the curriculum. Everybody in the class was white. There were only three people of color, including myself, and it felt horrible. I felt very alienated in there.

He told me he taught Latinx literature and that it was so fun. ... The moment I stepped in there, it felt welcoming, it felt like there was a community, and he just wanted you to be authentic.

What do you want the adults in power in Denver Public Schools to know?

Nayeli: We want our teacher back. ... That's not just a teacher to us. That's a safe person. ... Him being one of the only Northside Chicanos at North High School, that's a big support system.

Martin: Not only do we want our teacher back, but we want more

teachers who look like him, who represent their culture. We don't want people who just look like us that don't represent us to the fullest.

Daniela: Inclusivity and diversity isn't LGBTQ+ History Month or Black History Month. ... North thinks that they're somehow making that an inclusive way of supporting us. But that's in no way an inclusive way to support us.

Martin: It's like we're an inconvenience to them.

Nayeli: It's like we're written on a notepad and then tossed away.

Daniela: I know people who have

said they are going to join ethnic studies classes to counselors or AP teachers and they say, "That's not good for your transcript." ... I don't think us learning and acting on where we come from is something that makes us look bad to colleges. I don't think that's what should be told to us by our teachers.

Viridiana: We've been called "troubled kids." Or that teachers know how to handle "kids like us" because they're worked at other schools where the majority of the population is "kids like us."

Martin: It's always "you people."

Viridiana: We've reported it and

said something, but nothing ever gets done.

Nayeli: The same kids that teachers and a lot of administrators think of as "troubled," teachers like Mr. Hernández see us as kids who are going to get somewhere in life.

Melanie Asmar is a senior reporter for Chalkbeat Colorado, covering Denver Public Schools. This story was originally published by Chalkbeat.

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wall." And we will succeed because we must. We do this for and in support of the brave, bold, and most important work that you do.

I believe in you, and in saying this I know I speak for this department. We all believe in you.

Keep finding ways to navigate educational constraints to ensure that each baby you teach (pre-k thru 12; they're all our babies) get what they need to consider, to ache, to recover, to deconstruct, to process, and to, then, socially reconstruct this unfortunate history, this legacy of violence this nation continues to (re)produce.

Thank you for remaining with us in the departments of education, with the colleges and universities, and with the kids you teach, their families, and the social con-

ditions of which the kids continue their best to try to make sense. Teachers, thank you for providing the babies creative, self-relevant ways to resist the contemporary and find a pathway to love and to our common humanity.

With love and support *siempre* (always),

Lisa Arrastia, PhD, is the Founding Director of The Ed Factory, a former teacher, school leader, and founder, and she is the curator of the transmedia project Young People's Archive, East Side Freedom Library. This oped is republished from Common Dreams under a Creative Commons license CC BY-NC-ND 3.0.

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Castelin presentó una queja ante la Oficina del Superintendente de Seguros, la agencia estatal que regula el sector. Encontró un agente comprensivo en Española que estaba dispuesto a ayudarlo a solucionar las cosas con la compañía y, después de mucho tiempo y estrés, consiguió que le renovaran la póliza.

La Oficina del Superintendente de Seguros lleva a cabo una complicada danza, intentando que los seguros estén disponibles y sean asequibles para el mayor número posible de habitantes de Nuevo México, al tiempo que permite a las compañías la suficiente libertad de precios y pólizas para que les merezca la pena seguir operando en el estado.

A medida que aumenta el riesgo de incendios forestales, también lo hace el reto de equilibrar estos objetivos opuestos. Cuando la gobernadora Michelle Luján Grisham declaró el estado de emergencia en los condados de Colfax, Lincoln, Mora, Sandoval, San Miguel y Valencia, la orden prohibía efectivamente la cancelación de seguros de propiedad durante 90 días en esos seis condados. Pero no hay nada que impida a las empresas

cancelar esas políticas en el futuro - o, para el caso, la cancelación de las políticas en otros condados en este momento.

El estado tiene una opción poco conocida para los propietarios de viviendas que no pueden encontrar cobertura en el mercado regular. El Programa de Seguros de Propiedad de Nuevo México (NMPIP), una asociación sin ánimo de lucro, se considera "un último recurso", dijo la directora ejecutiva Analisa Sisneros. "No queremos que la gente acuda a nosotros. No nos anunciamos ni tratamos de conseguir negocio".

Aunque son mejores que nada, la cobertura y la indemnización que ofrecen proporcionan mucha menos protección que una póliza estándar para propietarios de viviendas. Y todavía no cubren a todo el mundo.

Hace doce años, Jack Long, veterano del ejército de 72 años y ganadero jubilado, vendió su terreno de 5.000 acres cerca de Wagon Mound tras la muerte de su esposa y se redujo a una pequeña parcela en Chacón.

Su casa no está asegurada. "Si tienes una estufa de leña en una casa móvil, no puedes conseguir



Foto/Photo: Michael Benanav for Searchlight New Mexico

La familia de Eloy Zamora tiene una propiedad con varias casas en Guadalupita, Nuevo México. Su nieto, Zant, que tiene experiencia como bombero, se quedó allí para intentar salvar las casas. / Eloy Zamora's family owns property with several houses on it in Guadalupita, New México. His grandson, Zant, who has firefighting experience, remained there to try to save the homes.

un seguro", dijo, y luego sonrió. "Tengo una estufa de leña que te enamoraría".

Kate Uehlein, cuya casa en Guadalupita se quemó el 12 de mayo, tampoco tiene seguro. "Las compañías no aseguran las yurtas", ex-

plica. Pero se muestra filosófica al respecto. "La vida sigue su curso. A veces hay que confiar en el universo. Puede que tarde unos meses, pero lo reconstruiré... He oído que las ovejas están a salvo".

Bryan Doerner, un agente de State Farm en Santa Fe, dijo que desde que comenzaron los incendios, "mucha gente que vive fuera de la red ha estado llamando por el seguro. En las últimas dos semanas, he recibido el doble de llamadas para asegurar yurtas que en todos mis 15 años en Nuevo México. Otras son de paja o están hechas de neumáticos y botellas de vidrio. Cada una tiene que ser evaluada individualmente". No pudo predecir cuántos podrían conseguir pólizas.

A los que se queden sin seguro y pierdan su casa en un futuro in-

cidio forestal les quedará una terrible esperanza: que el incendio que la destruyó crezca lo suficiente como para que el presidente lo declare desastre mayor.

Michael Benanav es escritor, fotógrafo y narrador digital residente en el norte de Nuevo México. Este artículo fue publicado originalmente por Searchlight New Mexico, una organización de noticias no partidista y sin fines de lucro dedicada al periodismo de investigación en Nuevo México.

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Foto/Photo: Michael Benanav for Searchlight New Mexico

William Sandoval, de Chacón, Nuevo México, se sienta en su catre en el refugio de evacuación de Peñasco con sus dos perros. Su familia ha vivido en Chacón durante cinco generaciones. / William Sandoval from Chacón, New Mexico, sits on his cot at the Peñasco evacuation shelter with his two dogs. His family has lived in Chacón for five generations.



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Estudiantes

“

“En total he tenido dos maestros de color. ... el Sr. Hernández fue uno de los únicos maestros que realmente mostraba orgullo por su raza y cultura.”

Martin Castañon,
Estudiante de la
Secundaria North

Viridiana: Yo conocí al Sr. Hernández cuando comenzó el año. ... recuerdo que le dije lo mucho que odiaba estar en la clase de Lenguaje AP porque no sentía conexión con el currículo. Todos en la clase eran blancos. Solo éramos

tres estudiantes de color, contándome a mí, y me sentía horrible. Me sentía sumamente aislada.

Entonces él me dijo que era el maestro de Literatura Latinx y que la clase era divertida. ... tan pronto llegué, me sentí bienvenida, sentí comunidad, y él únicamente quería que uno se mostrara de manera auténtica.

¿Qué les gustaría que los adultos a cargo del Distrito de Escuelas Públicas de Denver sepan?

Nayeli: Queremos que nuestro maestro regrese. ... para nosotros no es un simple maestro. Es alguien en que nos hace sentir seguros. ... Él, siendo uno de los únicos Chicanos en la Secundaria North, era un excelente sistema de apoyo.

Martin: No solo queremos que nuestro maestro regrese, también

queremos más maestros que se vean como él, que representen su cultura. No queremos gente que se vea como nosotros pero que no nos represente.

Daniela: Ser inclusivos y diversos es más que celebrar el Mes de la Historia LGBTQ+ o el Mes de la Historia Negra. ... la North piensa que esa es la manera inclusiva de apoyarnos. Pero de ninguna manera lo es.

Martin: Es como que somos una inconveniencia para ellos.

Nayeli: Es como que nos anotan en un cuaderno pero luego nos desechan.

Daniela: Sé de personas que han dicho que les han dicho a los orientadores o maestros de AP que se van a inscribir en clases de estudios étnicos y les han dicho, “Eso no se verá bien en tu transcripción

de créditos.” No creo que aprender y actuar de conformidad con quienes somos sea algo que nos haga menos atractivos para las universidades. Los maestros no deberían decirnos eso.

Viridiana: Nos han llamado “problemáticos.” O que los maestros saben cómo manejar a “estudiantes como nosotros” porque han trabajado en otras escuelas donde la mayoría del estudiantado es “como nosotros.”

Martin: Siempre usan frases como “you people” (la gente como ustedes).

Viridiana: Lo hemos reportado, pero no hacen nada.

Nayeli: Los mismos estudiantes que los maestros y muchos administradores tildan de “problemáticos” son los que maestros como el Sr. Hernández ven como chicos que van a lograr algo en la vida.

Melanie Asmar es reportera senior de Chalkbeat Colorado y cubre historias sobre el Distrito de Escuelas Públicas de Denver. Esta historia fue publicada originalmente por Chalkbeat. Traducido por Milly Suazo-Martínez.

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Health

Colorado through their peer-leadership programs, emotional support services, and therapeutic approaches to learning and development.

“May is Mental Health Awareness month and a critical time for us to focus on teen mental health. As I heard from several Golden High School students who spoke today, we need to focus on building communities that include strong support systems and trusted adults as part of an overall strategy for ensuring students’ wellbeing,” Weiser said. “The ongoing work they and our community partners are engaged in statewide is saving lives, which is why I will continue to urge our state to invest in the critical resources and infrastructure that are necessary to support our youth.”

“It’s easy to feel misunderstood and feel like you don’t have anyone who knows what you’re going through, so it’s important to know you’re not—and we say this all the time—you’re not alone here,” said Soli Ficco, an 11th grade member of Sources of Strength at Golden High School.

“One of the most important pieces of education is peer connection,” said Brian Conroy, Principal, Golden High School. “We can make each other’s lives better. I think that’s where we as a community have said enough is enough and allowed students here to take charge of their own connections.”

“The Sources of Strength vision is to empower a well world. We do this by partnering with peer leaders and trusted adults to increase help-seeking behaviors and promote connectedness in schools throughout Colorado. It is a privi-

lege to partner with Attorney General Weiser’s Office and the Colorado Office of Suicide Prevention to expand the Sources of Strength reach throughout Colorado,” said Dan Adams, Vice President of Programs for Sources of Strength.

Reports submitted to the Safe2Tell program show that mental health is a top concern for students and communities. Preliminary data from the 2021-2022 school year highlighted in the Youth Mental Health Report shows that 19% of the 16,726 reports submitted to the program were related to mental health. About 50 of those who submitted mental health reports chose to be transferred to Colorado Crisis Services for direct support. The report also states that most urgent safety concerns reported to the program are submitted by students about their peers. While Safe2Tell encourages students to first talk to a trusted adult, when possible, data also clearly shows that students are vital to ensuring each other’s wellbeing.

Schools are also key to ensuring students and programs have the tools they need to be successful. The top report submitted to Safe2Tell is a threat of suicide by a student. Although teen suicide rates in Colorado have held steady since a peak in 2019, suicides remain the top cause of death for Coloradans between 12-24 years of age and demand more urgency and vigilance on the issue of teen mental health.

[Click here to read the 2022 Youth Mental Health Report.](#)

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on January 6, 2021, when an angry, pro-Trump mob tried to keep Biden’s win from being certified. Trump and his people riled up a multitude convinced that their violence was justified, because the election had been “stolen” from their supreme leader. And the violence resulted in deaths. But white nationalists’ discomfort is a sign of their own demise, morally, historically, and philosophically speaking. While they erroneously say that people of color are trying to “replace” them—as if demographics were just a magical invention or a myth—they are reacting violently and, at the same time, attacking minorities they are rejecting and, even worse, killing them. It turns out that racist rhetoric, sooner or later, always generates violence and death.

Maribel Hastings is a Senior Advisor to América’s Voice. David Torres is a Spanish-language Advisor at América’s Voice.

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federal money for DHS to contract with private providers for approximately 90 additional treatment beds around the state in the next fiscal year. The beds can either be used for competency restoration services or to treat people with mental health needs who aren't necessarily facing criminal charges.

'Step-up' and 'step-down' beds for less severe cases

Like Amabile, former Boulder resident Sylvia Tawse has an adult son with schizoaffective disorder. Over the years, he's been hospitalized 22 times for acute behavioral health needs, she told *Colorado Newsline*. Tawse's son has been at the Boulder County Jail for the last 14 months, she said, and received competency restoration treatment through the RISE Program.

Tawse's son was discharged from a Colorado Springs hospital more than a year ago in the midst of a psychotic episode — even though she'd urged the hospital's medical director to keep him for longer than a six-day stay, she said.

"He didn't know how to get himself home (to Boulder)," Tawse said, adding that she had to scramble to find someone to pick him up. "There's no require-

ment for a continuum of care, so a hospital can just arbitrarily decide, 'OK, we need this bed opened up, you're going out the door.'"

Three days after being discharged from the Colorado Springs hospital, Tawse's son ended up walking from downtown Boulder to Tawse's farm in Longmont. It was a cold April day, and he was wearing nothing but boxer shorts, she said. He arrived sunburned from head to toe with blood blisters covering his feet. When Tawse offered him a glass of water, he physically attacked her, she said.

Tawse's son ran into a field, Tawse said, and later cooperated with police when they arrived to arrest him. After 14 months in jail, he was recently deemed mentally competent to face criminal charges. It's still unclear whether he will be able to receive the long-term care he needs, Tawse said, though she hopes the Colorado Mental Health Institute at Pueblo will have a bed for her son.

"I'm not here to justify my son's actions," she said. "I don't blame him, because he was completely out of his mind. ... I blame that medical director, though, at the hospital who three days before ignored what I was trying to explain

to him and warn him, and I blame him for callously just discharging my son to the streets of a city he didn't know."

The 125 long-term beds will be "step-up" or "step-down" beds meant for people with serious mental illness, a substance use disorder, or both, who need long-term residential care but aren't at the point of requiring acute care in a hospital. Some of those patients might have Medicaid and be eligible for federal reimbursement, but others will require the state to cover the costs of their care.

The beds are meant to fill a gap that Amabile and Tawse encountered when their sons were discharged from the hospital after experiencing a mental health crisis. After an emergency room visit, they still needed continuing residential care to get stable. That less intensive level of care is known to advocates as the "missing middle," and it's severely lacking in Colorado.

Amabile and her husband once spent \$60,000 to send their son to a private facility in Houston for six weeks, she said, only to have him discharged when "they didn't want him anymore."

If someone had said, "Come up with \$5 million and we will cure your kid," we would go out and rob

banks to get the money," she reflected. "But it's not that simple."

Mental Health America's *2022 State of Mental Health in America* report, which used data from 2018-2019, ranked Colorado in last place overall for adult mental health. The ranking accounted for a variety of factors related to the prevalence of mental illness and access to care. Among the states and the District of Columbia, Colorado had the fourth-highest percentage of adults who reported being unable to access the care that they needed.

Amabile and other advocates fought for the funding to add step-up and step-down care for people leaving hospitals or for those who may not be at the point of crisis that would require an emergency room visit — as in, an imminent danger to themselves or others. The locations for the 125 beds haven't been identified yet, HB-1303 directs the state to locate them across Colorado, either by renovating existing facilities, creating new space or contracting with private providers. Some of the beds may be used for competency restoration for people facing less-serious criminal charges.

The residential facilities must offer medication assistance, intensive case management, life skills training and direct care, including help with daily activities such as bathing, using the bathroom and eating.

"The idea here is that you can stay as long as you need to be there," Amabile said. "You have a place to be, it's a therapeutic environment, you have access to care, and you could stay there for a month or two months or three months if that's what you need to get stabilized."

The high price tag for HB-1303 — and the need for increased state investment to pay for the new beds after 2024 — caused some Republicans to balk, but Amabile's co-prime sponsor, Rep. Shane Sandridge of Colorado Springs, urged his GOP colleagues to support the bill.

"There's certain things that the government has to pay for. ... This is something that unfortunately, the government has to pay for," Sandridge said during House debate April 19, arguing that the legislation would help the state address homelessness, mental illness and substance use.

HB-1303 secured final House approval on May 10 by a *vote* of 51-14, with 10 Republicans and all Democrats voting "yes." In the Senate, it passed 32-3, with Republican Sens. Chris Holbert of Douglas County, Paul Lundeen of Monument and Jerry Sonnenberg of Sterling voting "no."

Outside the Capitol, supporters of the bill included the Colorado Hospital Association, the League of Women Voters of Colorado, the Colorado Association of Family and Children's Agencies, and the Colorado Center on Law and Policy, a progressive advocacy organization. The Mesa County Department of Human Services opposed the legislation.

The lack of support Tawse and her husband found for their son in Colorado was part of their motivation to move recently to Taos, New Mexico, after retiring, she said. While she applauds the investments made this session in behavioral health, she emphasizes that the new beds are just a drop in the bucket compared with what's really needed.

"Because of stigma with mental health, we allow inhumane practices, inhumane policies, and an anemic level of care in facilities to be our shame in Colorado," Tawse said. "Adding 141 beds is a great step forward, and I hope we take that step forward 100 more times."

Faith Miller is a Reporter for Colorado Newsline. This article is republished from Colorado Newsline under a Creative Commons license.

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Wildfires



Photo/Foto: Michael Benanav for Searchlight New México

A tower of smoke from the Calf Canyon/Hermits Peak fire rises northeast of Jicarita Peak (12,835') on May 15. / Una torre de humo del incendio de Calf Canyon/Hermits Peak se eleva al noreste de Jicarita Peak (12,835') el 15 de mayo.



Photo/Foto: Michael Benanav for Searchlight New México

Jack Long, a rancher who retired to Chacón, at the Peñasco, New México, evacuation shelter. His neighbor's son is helping to protect his place, which is uninsured. / Jack Long, un rancharo que se retiró a Chacón, en el refugio de evacuación de Peñasco, Nuevo México. El hijo de su vecino está ayudando a proteger su casa, que no está asegurada.

Pollution

nior Director of Regulatory and Legislative Affairs, EDF. "Frontline communities need assurance that smaller wells with leak-prone equipment will be monitored, intentionally-polluting equipment like pneumatic controllers will be phased out, and that the polluting and wasteful practice of routine flaring will be ended."

In the United States, oil and gas production is the largest industrial methane polluter, a greenhouse gas at least 80 times more powerful than carbon dioxide. Peer-reviewed science shows that toxic pollutants released along with methane from oil and gas faci-

ties puts people at risk for cancer, respiratory illness, fetal defects, blood disorders, and neurological problems --and that risk increases for children and the elderly.

The Oil and Gas Threat Map displays information about those living within a half mile of oil and gas facilities in New Mexico and other states. Although scientific literature shows that health impacts are also associated at distances greater than ½ mile, we conservatively use ½ mile because it is the distance at which these impacts have been most clearly correlated. The Oil and Gas Threat Map will also display data about the risk

of increased cancer and respiratory health rates at the county level. In addition to the data that the Oil and Gas Threat Map presents, users can enter their own address to see if they live in a threat zone.

More Information

- To see the map and analysis, including data in spreadsheet form, video of the pollution that constitutes the threat, video interviews of impacted residents, and the science underlying the threat radius, visit oilandgasthreatmap.com
- New Mexico Threat Map [fact sheet](#)

states of emergency in Colfax, Lincoln, Mora, Sandoval, San Miguel and Valencia counties, the order effectively forbade property insurance cancellations for 90 days in those six counties. But there is nothing to stop companies from canceling those policies in the future — or, for that matter, canceling the policies in other counties right now.

The state does have a little-known option for homeowners who can't find coverage in the regular market. The New Mexico Property Insurance Program (NMPIP), a nonprofit association, considers itself "a last resort," said Executive Director Analisa Sisneros. "We don't want people to come with us. We don't advertise ourselves or try to get business."

While they are better than nothing, the coverage and compensation they offer provide far less protection than a standard homeowners policy. And they still don't cover everyone.

Twelve years ago, Jack Long, a 72-year-old Army veteran and retired rancher, sold his 5,000-acre spread near Wagon Mound following the death of his wife and downsized to a small plot of land in Chacón.

His place is not insured. "If you got a wood stove in a mobile home, you can't get insurance," he said, then smiled. "I've got a wood stove that you'd fall in love with."

Kate Uehlein, whose place in Guadalupita burned down on May 12, is also uninsured. "Companies won't insure yurts," she explained. But she is philosophical about it. "Life goes on. Sometimes you just have to trust the universe. It might take a few months, but I'll rebuild...I've heard the sheep are safe."

Bryan Doerner, a State Farm

agent in Santa Fe, said that since the fires began, "so many people who live off-grid have been calling about insurance. In the last two weeks, I've had twice as many calls about insuring yurts as in all my 15 years in New México. Others are straw-bale or made of tires and glass-bottles. Each one has to be assessed individually." He couldn't predict how many might actually be able to get policies.

Those who remain uninsured and lose their home to a future wildfire will be left with one dreadful hope: that the blaze that destroyed it grows big enough for the president to declare it a major disaster.

Michael Benanav is a writer, photographer and digital storyteller based in northern New México. This article was originally published by Searchlight New Mexico, a non-partisan, nonprofit news organization dedicated to investigative reporting in New Mexico.

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Endorsements

to elect reliable champions and allies who would allow New Mexicans to make their own decisions about their bodies, lives and destinies. "We're framing this election as being a crucial piece of the overall election this year," Martinez noted. "Especially to protect bodily autonomy for folks who need reproductive health care access, abortion access, gender-affirming health care: all of those things." According to the Human Rights Campaign, more than 300 bills were introduced this year targeting the LGBTQ+ community nationwide.

Roz Brown is a Producer with Public News Service.

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Mendiáz-Rivera pointed to three El Puente alumni who have recently been highlighted for their achievements.

Biraj Silwal won first place and \$5,000 this spring in the 2022 UNM and CNM Mobile App Contest after working with the UNM Basic Needs Insecurity Research Project to develop the LoboEats app. The app enables offices on UNM's Main Campus to post their food availability and students with the app will be notified in real time. Students can also open the app at any time to see if there happens to be food available nearby. He spent nearly 330 hours writing computer code for the app.

Eric Olaguir has been accepted into the highly competitive Apple Scholars Program. Students from across the U.S. were selected by sharing their views on the future of the tech industry and how they perceived themselves contributing to the advancement of technology in areas of accessibility, education, environment, inclusion and diversity or privacy. He received a \$15,000 scholarship, assigned an Apple mentor for the year, and par-

ticipated in an exclusive one-week immersion event with Apple.

Raven Otero Symphony is the first New Mexican to be selected for the Brooke Owens Fellowship Class, a nationally acclaimed non-profit program recognizing outstanding undergraduate women and other gender minorities with a multitude of internship and mentorship opportunities including in the aerospace field. Otero-Symphony is a senior studying statistics, and is one of 51 students chosen out of more than 1,000 applications worldwide.

Past fellow (2020-2021) Noah Lucero completed his Bachelor of Science degree in Biochemistry with a designation from the Honors College. He will begin to pursue his doctorate from the UNM School of Medicine beginning in July. His research topic was "Attitudes and perspectives toward screening for Cerebral Cavernous Malformation," a condition caused by a common Hispanic genetic mutation that disproportionately affects New Mexicans.

"El Puente helped me understand that research is not as am-

biguous as it is often made out to be," Lucero said. "The program helped me realize that anyone can do research and that everyone's contribution to our pool of knowledge on a subject is meaningful. The program supported me all the way through understanding what research is, all the way through identifying a faculty mentor and providing me with the formal resources to conduct research in an institution like UNM."

Mendiáz-Rivera emphasized students aren't required to have any research experience.

"I think students are afraid to apply because they don't have research experience but that's the point of El Puente. It's a bridge. We're supposed to take you from that introductory phase to a point where you are very comfortable with your skills as a researcher and a scholar to then apply for other programs or graduate or professional school," he said.

That's why he targets incoming sophomore and junior students: "I'm not looking for students who have already developed and carried out a whole research project."

And at the end of the program, not all students decide to pursue research.

"That's OK. We want a space for students to explore their skills and capabilities. Do we want them to continue with research? Absolutely and most of them end up doing it. But there's no pressure like in other programs."

Applications for the upcoming year starting in the fall are now being taken and the application deadline is May 31, 2022. Mendiáz-Rivera urges interested students to apply.

The program includes a \$2,000 award for completion of fellowship requirements to be split between the Fall and Spring semesters. Students should be enrolled at UNM for Fall 2022 and Spring 2023 and able to commit for full academic year. A GPA of 3.0 or above is preferred. Students must meet one of three of the following criteria:

- Member of an underrepresented ethnic group in higher education
- First generation college student
- Qualify as low income

The program is open to any student regardless of immigration status.

"As director, the most satisfying thing about working with El Puente scholars is seeing their confidence grow exponentially. A lot of students from first-generation, minority backgrounds and low-income households come to UNM with imposter syndrome, feeling like they don't belong here 'UNM is not the space for us, we can't be topnotch scholars' and at the end of the program, all of my students leave knowing that they are the best scholars on campus and that they are contributing to their fields, and that they are absolutely brilliant and that rising confidence in their own skills is amazing. I don't think that can be directly taught. That's something they have to discover for themselves."

Mary Beth King is a Public Relations Specialist with University of New Mexico.

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EMPIECE AHORA SU BÚSQUEDA DEL PREESCOLAR PARA ESTE OTOÑO

El Programa Preescolar de Denver ayuda a todas las familias de la ciudad a acceder al preescolar. En nuestra web encontrará:

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FINANCIAMOS LA EDUCACIÓN PREESCOLAR DE CALIDAD EN DENVER

La Beca de Investigación El Puente comenzó como una pasantía de servicio a principios de la década de 2000, pero evolucionó en 2014 para convertirse en el programa centrado en la investigación de pregrado que es hoy, explicó el director del programa Alejandro Mendíaz-Rivera. Él es un ex alumno del programa cuando era una pasantía basada en el servicio. Su propia experiencia en este programa le llevó a cursar una doble licenciatura en Estudios Latinoamericanos y Español durante su carrera universitaria y a convertirse en un profesional de Asuntos Estudiantiles centrado en el avance de las oportunidades educativas para los estudiantes minoritarios.

"Recibimos comentarios de nuestros estudiantes que luchaban por ser admitidos en programas de investigación como el McNair o que encontraban desafíos al solicitar una escuela de posgrado, ya sea aquí en la UNM o en otro lugar... Enseñamos los fundamentos de la investigación académica y la solicitud de ingreso a las escuelas de posgrado y profesionales porque estamos tratando de tender un puente a los estudiantes para que tengan oportunidades de continuar y para que ingresen a las escuelas de posgrado y profesionales", explicó Mendíaz-Rivera, señalando que El Puente significa "El Puente".

Para participar en el programa, los estudiantes deben pertenecer a un grupo étnico subrepresentado en la educación superior, ser un estudiante universitario de primera generación o calificar como de bajos ingresos.

"Debido a la demografía de la universidad y al hecho de que estamos alojados en El Centro de la Raza, la mayoría de los solicitantes se identifican como hispanos o latinos, pero también trabajo con estudiantes que no se identifican de esa manera", dijo Mendíaz-Rivera, y añadió: "El Puente fomenta una comunidad intelectual única basada en la incubación de la brillantez de los estudiantes de la Raza e históricamente subrepresentados."

El Puente se financia con las cuotas de los estudiantes en lugar de con subvenciones, por lo que no está sujeto a algunas de las restricciones impuestas a programas similares. El programa está limitado a unos 20 estudiantes universitarios, pero debido al aumento de la financiación para el próximo curso escolar tendrá cabida para 24. Los estudiantes de El Puente se reparten entre una variedad de disciplinas y no se limitan a un determinado subconjunto de carreras como la mayoría de los programas de investigación.

"Puedo trabajar con cualquier carrera, siempre y cuando estén interesados en investigar y aprender sobre las escuelas de posgrado y profesionales", dijo Mendíaz-Rivera.

“

"Creo que los estudiantes tienen miedo de aplicar porque no tienen experiencia en investigación, pero ese es el punto de El Puente. Es un puente".

Alejandro Mendíaz-Rivera,
El Centro de la Raza.

Uno de los estudiantes, que investigó cómo Nuevo México puede aumentar el ritmo de desarrollo de las energías renovables, forma parte del Comité Asesor Juvenil del PNM.

Mendíaz-Rivera señaló a tres ex alumnos de El Puente que recientemente han sido destacados por sus logros.

Biraj Silwal ganó el primer lugar y 5.000 dólares esta primavera en el Concurso de Aplicaciones Móviles 2022 de la UNM y el CNM después de trabajar con el Proyecto de Investigación de Inseguridad de Necesidades Básicas de la UNM para desarrollar la aplicación LoboEats. La aplicación permite a las oficinas del campus principal de la UNM publicar su disponibilidad de alimentos y los estudiantes con la aplicación serán notificados en tiempo real. Pasó casi 330 horas escribiendo el código informático de la aplicación.

Eric Olaguir ha sido aceptado en el competitivo programa Apple Scholars. Los estudiantes de todo Estados Unidos fueron seleccionados al compartir sus puntos de vista sobre el futuro de la industria tecnológica y cómo se perciben contribuyendo al avance de la tecnología en áreas de accesibilidad, educación, medio ambiente, inclusión y diversidad o privacidad. Recibió una beca de 15.000 dólares, se le asignó un mentor de Apple para el año y participó en un evento exclusivo de inmersión de una semana con Apple.

Raven Otero Symphony es la primera nueva mexicana en ser

seleccionada para la clase de becas Brooke Owens, un programa sin ánimo de lucro aclamado a nivel nacional que reconoce a mujeres universitarias destacadas y a otras minorías de género con multitud de oportunidades de prácticas y tutoría, incluso en el campo aeroespacial. Otero-Symphony es una estudiante de último año que estudia estadística, y es una de las 51 estudiantes elegidas entre más de 1.000 solicitudes de todo el mundo.

El ex becario (2020-2021) Noah Lucero completó su licenciatura en Bioquímica con una designación del Honors College. Comenzará a cursar su doctorado en la Facultad de Medicina de la UNM a partir de julio. Su tema de investigación fue "Actitudes y perspectivas hacia la detección de la Malformación Cavernosa Cerebral", una condición causada por una mutación genética hispana común que afecta desproporcionadamente a los nuevos mexicanos.

"El Puente me ayudó a entender que la investigación no es tan ambigua como a menudo se hace ver", dijo Lucero. "El programa me ayudó a darme cuenta de que cualquiera puede hacer investigación y que la contribución de todos a nuestro conjunto de conocimientos sobre un tema es significativa. El programa me apoyó en todo momento para entender lo que es la investigación, hasta identificar un mentor de la facultad y proporcionarme los recursos formales para llevar a cabo la investigación en una institución como la UNM."

Mendíaz-Rivera enfatizó que no se requiere que los estudiantes tengan experiencia en investigación.

"Creo que los estudiantes tienen miedo de aplicar porque no tienen experiencia en investigación, pero ese es el punto de El Puente. Es un puente. Se supone que debemos llevarlos desde esa fase introductoria hasta un punto en el que se sientan muy cómodos con sus habilidades como investigadores y académicos para luego solicitar otros programas o escuelas de posgrado o profesionales", dijo.

Por eso se dirige a estudiantes de segundo y tercer año: "No busco estudiantes que ya hayan de-

sarrollado y llevado a cabo todo un proyecto de investigación".

Y al final del programa, no todos los estudiantes deciden dedicarse a la investigación.

"No pasa nada. Queremos un espacio para que los estudiantes exploren sus habilidades y capacidades. ¿Queremos que sigan investigando? Por supuesto, y la mayoría acaba haciéndolo. Pero no hay presión como en otros programas".

Las solicitudes para el próximo año que comienza en otoño se están tomando ahora y la fecha límite de solicitud es el 31 de mayo de 2022. Mendíaz-Rivera insta a los estudiantes interesados a presentar su solicitud.

El programa incluye un premio de 2.000 dólares para completar los requisitos de la beca que se dividirá entre los semestres de otoño y primavera. Los estudiantes deben estar inscritos en la UNM para el otoño de 2022 y la primavera de 2023 y ser capaces de comprometerse durante todo el año académico. Se prefiere un GPA de 3.0 o superior. Los estudiantes deben cumplir uno de los tres criterios siguientes:

- Miembro de un grupo étnico subrepresentado en la educación superior
- Primera generación de estudiantes universitarios

• Calificar como de bajos ingresos

El programa está abierto a cualquier estudiante sin importar su estatus migratorio.

"Como director, lo más satisfactorio de trabajar con los becarios de El Puente es ver que su confianza crece exponencialmente. Muchos estudiantes de primera generación, de minorías y de hogares de bajos ingresos llegan a la UNM con el síndrome del impostor, sintiendo que no pertenecen aquí 'la UNM no es el espacio para nosotros, no podemos ser académicos de primera categoría' y al final del programa, todos mis estudiantes salen sabiendo que son los mejores académicos del campus y que están contribuyendo a sus campos, y que son absolutamente brillantes y que el aumento de la confianza en sus propias habilidades es increíble. No creo que eso se pueda enseñar directamente. Es algo que tienen que descubrir por sí mismos".

Mary Beth King es especialista en relaciones públicas de la Universidad de Nuevo México.

Traducido por Juan Carlos Uribe-The Weekly Issue/El Semanario.

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LEGALS

LEGALS

REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION DISTRICT DENVER, COLORADO

Public Notice of FFY 2023-2025 Triennial Disadvantaged Business Enterprise (DBE) Goal

In accordance with requirements of the U.S. Department of Transportation as set forth in 49 C.F.R. Part 26, as amended, the Regional Transportation District (RTD) in Denver, Colorado, hereby notifies the public that it is recommending the following Disadvantaged Business Enterprise (DBE) goal which represents the percentage of work to be accomplished by DBE prime contractors, subcontractors, consultants, vendors and material suppliers for professional services, construction and procurement contracts on federal-aid transit projects and grants during the Federal Fiscal Years of 2023-2025, beginning October 1, 2022 and ending September 30, 2025. The overall proposed DBE goal for FFY 2023-2025 is 14.5%. The DBE Goal Methodology and all information pertaining to this goal and a description of how it was selected is available for inspection from 8:00a.m. to 5:00p.m. (Mountain Time) at the Regional Transportation District Executive Offices located at 1660 Blake Street, Denver, Colorado 80202 for 30 calendar days following the publication of this notice. Digital version will be available through a Microsoft TEAMS virtual meeting upon request made through the RTD's Small Business Office email address: SBO@RTD-Denver.com. Written comments of this goal will be accepted for 45 calendar days from the date of publication of this notice. The comments are for informational purposes only and may be sent to the RTD Civil Rights Division, same address, AND to the Regional Civil Rights Officer, Federal Transit Administration, Regions VII and VIII, Byron Rogers Federal Building - 1961 Stout Street, Suite 13-301, Denver, Colorado 80202.

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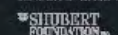
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"Quixote Nuevo" was subsequently co-produced by Herbold Stage, Huntington Theatre Company and Alley Theatre

A first adaptation of DON QUIXOTE was commissioned by and received its world premiere in 2009 at Oregon Shakespeare Festival (Bill Rauch, Artistic Director; Paul Nicholson, Executive Director)