

23 de Febrero 2023

THE WEEKLY ISSUE

# El Semanario

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**Story of Resilience** **8**  
*Una Historia de Resiliencia*

Photo/Foto: Alyson McClaran for MSU RED



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## Selma is Sacred Ground, Not a Place for Political Pretense

*Editor's Note: The following is an open letter to the President of the United States and Members of Congress, sent on Feb. 20 from national faith and civil rights leaders:*

This is a critical year in the life of our country. On the one hand, the President and progressive members of Congress have fought to pass policies that have lifted up Americans in many ways. From COVID relief measures to infrastructure investments to child tax credits that lifted

millions of children out of poverty (for a brief moment) to the appointment of the first Black woman Supreme Court Justice, we can celebrate some real progress.

But, on the other hand, with a Democratic President and control of the House and Senate for two years, Democratic leadership was unable to raise the federal minimum wage, which has not increased since 2009. 50 Republicans and 2 Democrats denied 55 million Americans a raise to \$15 an hour, and the same obstruction-

ist caucus filibustered every attempt to restore the Voting Rights Act, allowing regressive legislative bodies across the nation to pass more voter suppression bills than any time since Jim Crow and to go through another round of dangerous redistricting, which nullifies the potential power of progressive voting coalitions by stacking and packing votes in certain districts to predetermine outcomes before any vote is cast.

We are coming upon another remembrance of Bloody Sunday,

when the nation will recall how Black, white and brown Americans; Jews, Muslims, Christians, and Unitarians dared to put their bodies on the line when they did not have a political majority in order to expose the evils of segregation, racism, and the denial of voting rights. We will honor and remember those who knew, as Dr. King said, that if the masses of poor Black people and poor white people in the South could come together to form a po-

See [Selma](#) on page 18

“

We hear a lot of talk about threats to our democracy, but what is more of a threat to a democracy than voter suppression and the refusal to fully protect the 15th amendment and the 14th amendment's guarantee of equal protection?

## How Smart Funding to Help Asylum Seekers is a Win-Win for Everyone



Photo: RMIAN

### Megan Hope

Late last month, Denver officials announced the closure of several rec centers that sheltered more than 4,200 migrants bused here in early December. The reason: Many people traveled on to other cities or were transferred to short-term housing run by community organizations.

But after President Joe Biden recently announced that up to 30,000 people from Haiti, Nicaragua, Venezuela and Cuba would be allowed to enter the country each month, the need for sustainable support is greater than ever. That's why we've got to have more federal dollars to bolster case management — the wrap-around social services that help migrants fleeing violence and persecution get on their feet while awaiting their asylum verdicts.

“

Our emergency shelters have closed, but our city is still called upon to help those in need.

As one of four social workers at the nonprofit Rocky Mountain Immigrant Advocacy Network, I see this need daily. In Colorado, there are nearly 73,000 pending asylum

cases, and applicants wait an average of 1,239 days — 3.3 years — to learn if they can make a permanent home here. During that time, it's much better for migrants and Coloradans alike if we can help people become self-sufficient, rather than have them depend on limited shelter space.

Our social workers help people seeking asylum to navigate the confounding limbo they face. Most are not eligible for a work permit until six months after they apply for asylum. Only those actually granted asylum are eligible for Medicaid. We try to help asylum seekers detained by immigration find sponsors to provide initial housing and basic support. We inform families with cases before the Denver Immigration Court about food pantries, rental assistance, school enrollment, and medical and mental health care. When people are granted asylum, we ensure they are connected to resettlement agencies and economic assistance programs.

But organizations like RMIAN can barely keep up with the needs of newcomers, especially when we already have commitments to serve survivors of crime, people with mental health disabilities and other immigrant populations. Each of our social workers support roughly 30 clients at a time, but that's a drop in the bucket, and our limited capacity means we're often referred only the most urgent or complex cases.

So many more people would greatly benefit from our expertise in cobbling together resources for people awaiting immigration status. It's money well spent. Not only do we help asylum seekers become the productive contributors they want to be — people who can alleviate our chronic shortage of essential workers — but such investments also ensure better ac-

cess to housing and prevent the need for emergency services later.

In 2017, a federal case management pilot program offered legal help, housing referrals, medical care, English classes and assistance obtaining identity documents to more than 2,000 migrants in five cities. It costs just \$38 per person per day, which is significantly less than holding people in detention (an average of \$134 per person per day). The Trump administration terminated the program prematurely, but nevertheless, it was endorsed by Immigration and

Customs Enforcement, because 99% of participants appeared for their mandated check-ins and hearings. Most important to me, the program recognized the dignity of people who simply want to live in peace and safety. I've seen many migrants win asylum here and become successful — whether they're buying homes, pursuing educational degrees, landing good jobs or volunteering to help people who arrive after them.

Our emergency shelters have closed, but our city is still called upon to help those in need.

We have a cost-effective, common-sense solution. Case management empowers the world's most persecuted people and benefits us all.

*Megan Hope, LMSW, is social service project director at the Rocky Mountain Immigrant Advocacy Network Westminster. This commentary is republished from Colorado Newsline under a Creative Commons license.*

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Commentary/Comentario

# Between the Legacy of César Chávez and the Anti-Immigrant Vision of Republican Extremism

Maribel Hastings and David Torres

Eva Robles works in the fields of San Luis, in the county of Yuma, Arizona, harvesting broccoli, cauliflower, lettuce, cabbage, celery, asparagus, carrots, and dates. She came to Arizona from Sonora, México, at the age of 15; she began to work in the fields at the age of 18 and it took her 25 years to obtain her permanent residency. With all that effort and sharing

“All of us who work in the fields contribute a little bit to the country’s economy, and without us things would be different.”  
Eva Robles

this same hard work with dozens of undocumented workers every

day, this week—as on previous occasions—she and her co-workers will be demonized by Republicans coming to the border to blame migrants for all the ills of this country, without recognizing their contributions to the economy, never mind admitting that the hands of these farm workers sow, harvest, process, and pack the food that this nation consumes. Eva belongs to one of the industries considered to be essential, after all of the attention to public health and safety that the recent COVID-19 pandemic made visible. The pandemic also revealed the profound dependence the U.S. economy and society have on immigrant workers. However, some people are still bent on minimizing their importance to the strengthening of this nation of immigrants, the United States. For example, this week the House Judiciary Committee will hold a



Photo/Photo: America's Voice



Photo/Photo: America's Voice

hearing called “Biden’s Border Crisis: Part 2” in Yuma, Arizona, the city where the iconic farm worker leader César Chávez was born. With just a glance at the Republican congressmen comprising the delegation—Jim Jordan, Tom McClintock, Andy Biggs, and Matt Gaetz among the most recalcitrant—it’s easy to see that they are coming to repeat their tired old song about the border being “out of control” and that immigrants amount to

“terrorists” and “drug dealers.” “Since they don’t live here [at the border], they don’t know how we live,” Eva says in a phone interview. She adds: “What we do is work hard and help the economy of this country. They don’t know that we get up in the cold; that in times of heat we become dehydrated and wind up in the hospital, but the next day we continue doing this hard work be-

See Hastings & Torres on page 17

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## Entre el Legado de César Chávez y la Visión Antiinmigrante del Extremismo Republicano

Maribel Hastings y David Torres

Eva Robles trabaja en las cosechas de San Luis, en el condado de Yuma, Arizona, pizcando brócoli, coliflor, lechuga, repollo, apio, espárragos, zanahorias y dátiles. Llegó a Arizona desde Sonora, México, a los 15 años de edad; a los 18 comenzó a trabajar en el campo y le tomó 25 años obtener su residencia permanente. Con todo ese esfuerzo y aun cuando comparte las mismas arduas labores con decenas de trabajadores indocumentados todos los días, esta semana —como en ocasiones previas— será satanizada junto a sus compañeros de trabajo por los republicanos que vienen a la frontera a culpar a los migrantes de todos los males del país, sin reconocer sus aportes a la economía, ni admitir que las manos de esos trabajadores agrícolas siembran, recogen, procesan y empaacan los alimentos que consume esta nación. Eva pertenece a uno de los sectores considerados como esenciales, después de la atención a la salud y la seguridad pública, que visibilizó la reciente pandemia de Covid-19, y que evidenció la profunda dependencia de la economía y la sociedad estadounidenses en los trabajadores inmigrantes. Sin embargo, hay quienes aún hoy se em-

peñan en minimizar su importancia en el fortalecimiento de un país de inmigrantes como es Estados Unidos.

Por ejemplo, esta semana el Comité Judicial de la Cámara Baja realizará una audiencia denominada *La Crisis Fronteriza de Biden: Parte 2*, en Yuma, Arizona, la ciudad donde nació el icónico líder campesino César Chávez. Solamente con echar un vistazo a los congresistas republicanos que componen la delegación —Jim Jordan, Tom McClintock, Andy Biggs, Matt Gaetz, entre los más recalcitrantes— es fácil advertir que vienen a repetir su cansado libreto de una frontera “descontrolada” y de unos inmigrantes que equiparan con “terroristas” y “narcotraficantes”.

“Como no viven aquí (en la frontera), no saben cómo vivimos nosotros”, dice Eva en entrevista telefónica. Y añade: “Lo que hacemos es trabajar duro y ayudar a la economía del país. No saben que nosotros nos levantamos, pasamos frío, en tiempo de calor nos deshidratamos, terminamos en el hospital y al día siguiente seguimos echándole duro al trabajo, porque se tiene que sacar la cosecha y sacar a nuestras familias adelante”. Y tiene mucha razón esta inmigrante, pues ese duro trabajo se refleja directamente en la enorme producción agrícola que ha hecho

de Estados Unidos el líder en el sector, país que fue capaz de contribuir en 2020 con \$175 mil millones de dólares al Producto Interno Bruto (PIB), junto con la pesca y la industria forestal, según New American Economy. En 2018, por ejemplo, fue la nación mayor productora de maíz con 392 millones de toneladas. Y todo eso, y más, con las manos de miles de familias trabajadoras migrantes que son ninguneadas y atacadas constantemente, como pretende hacerlo de nuevo en Yuma el ala más extremista del Partido Republicano, enquistada como mayoría ahora mismo en el Congreso.

“Todos los que trabajamos en el campo aportamos un granito a la economía del país, porque sin nosotros sería diferente”.  
Eva Robles

Eva viene de una familia de trabajadores agrícolas originalmente de Sonora. Su abuelo, Juan Robles, trabajó y marchó con Chávez, el líder que encabezó la lucha por

Vea Hastings & Torres/Esp, página 16





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Commentary/Commentario

## Wounded Knee: My Firsthand Account

Madonna Thunder Hawk

The Lakota Law team has been helping organize and create media for this upcoming weekend's 50th anniversary of our standoff with the U.S. government at Wounded Knee. For a brief introduction to what went down in 1973, I encourage you to [watch this video from PBS](#), which includes direct testimony from me, my cousin Russell Means, and other key American Indian Movement (AIM) leaders.

And to dig a little deeper, read on. Today, I share with you the story of my experience on the ground during that monumental moment. I'll talk about the way things unfolded and how those weeks under siege were the first domino in a series of events that catapulted our movement into the international spotlight — and also eventually led to the formation of the Lakota People's Law Project.



Photo: Lakota Peoples Law Project

folded and how those weeks under siege were the first domino in a series of events that catapulted our movement into the international spotlight — and also eventually led to the formation of the Lakota People's Law Project.

By the time the standoff began that February, I was already a seasoned activist. I'd met with the local AIM chapter in the Twin Cities in the 1960s, and I'd joined relatives in California to occupy Alcatraz. When the call went out from the people of Pine Ridge to help lead discussions to confront issues in their communities, I didn't hesitate. Little did I know that a planned series of strategy meetings would turn into an epic, months-long siege that would threaten our lives and gain international media attention.

On the evening of Feb. 27, after we finished talking with folks in a village called Calico, our caravan headed toward Porcupine.

We were several miles north of Wounded Knee when the word went out that the feds were upon us. Armored personnel carriers had been spotted, and the Army, FBI, and other law enforcement agencies were converging on the Pine Ridge Reservation. We realized we had to get the caravan and our people to safety. And when we got to the village of Wounded Knee, the first firefight started.

Many people, including everyone in our car, got arrested that night, and for the first four or five nights of the occupation, I was in jail. Once released, I did what everyone else was doing: I loaded up on supplies and headed back to Wounded Knee. And there I remained until the siege ended more than two months later.

We took a stand that mattered, and we held the world's attention on nightly newscasts.

mained until the siege ended more than two months later.

On the ground, it was minute to minute, day to day. It was a full military action, and we never knew what would happen. Firefights occurred almost every night, with flares and tracers raining down to light up the area. My job — I was one of four women doing this

See [Thunder Hawk](#) on page 17

## New Mexico, the Land of Wealth and Poverty

Mayor Alan Webber

“Just like wealth is generational, so is poverty.” That quote comes from this year's Kids Count Data Book from New Mexico Voices for Children. It's a call for immediate steps to address the urgent problem that faces every community in New Mexico, including Santa Fe: Poverty.

Kids Count came out just as the legislature began a session with unprecedented wealth in the State's coffers. Unprecedented wealth and generational poverty coming together at the same time.

ty coming together at the same time.

Here in Santa Fe, the data is stark: In 2021, 13% of all residents and 20% of the children in Santa Fe County were living in poverty.

That one statistic runs through every other indicator of our kids' well-being. Not enough food. Too much housing insecurity. Not enough school attendance. Too many disconnected youth.

Poverty connects these other harsh realities. Poverty colors the lives of too many Santa Fe kids from the moment they're born. Too often it shrinks their opportunities and limits their potential.

Here's how I think about it.

Imagine a triangle—an iron triangle—that traps too many families in a vicious feedback cycle. The top of the triangle is poverty. One point of the triangle is educational achievement. The other point is job opportunity.

Poverty limits our kids' ability to get a great education. According to the Kid's Count data, in Santa Fe Public Schools, only 33% of the students are proficient and above in English; only 23% are proficient and above in math; 51% are chronically absent.

Poor educational performance limits job opportunities. In Santa Fe 7% of families with children have no parent working; 11% of Santa Fe teens are neither attending school nor working.

Poor job opportunities lead to more poverty.

It goes on as a vicious cycle, generation after generation.

To be fair, both the Santa Fe Public Schools and the Governor, among others, are aware of this deep problem and are working on it. Superintendent Chavez, his team and the School Board have taken important and innovative

“Just like wealth is generational, so is poverty.”

steps to keep kids in school, to give them mentoring, counseling and academic support, all ways to get our kids the education they need.

To her credit, the Governor has attacked directly two of the points of the triangle. Her investments in education lead the nation. From teachers' salaries to early childhood education, to free college and more, the Governor has shown remarkable courage and leadership.

The same goes for her leadership in creating more job opportunities for our young people. Instead of just talking about creating more kinds of jobs for all kinds of people in all parts of our state, we're seeing it happen. Outdoor recreation is a growing industry, the building trades are booming, and film and digital jobs are thriving at a record-breaking rate.

But I believe that the most important step still awaits us: We need to attack the top of the triangle. We need to go after poverty directly.

I believe the program we've created in Santa Fe as part of the [Mayor's for a Guaranteed Income \(MGI\)](#) is the way to end generational poverty in New Mexico. Our MGI program attacks poverty

See [Webber](#) on page 16



César E. Chávez Peace and Justice Committee of Denver

## 22nd Annual Marcha & Celebration

### Reclaiming Male Responsibility through Nonviolence

Save The Date

Saturday, April 1, 2023

Catholic Mass: Regis University

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[Details coming soon!](#)

For more event information:

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## Colorado Printmaker Inspires Students with His Story of Resilience

By Peyton García

**J**avier Flores' story, from his origins to his art, is a testimony to resilience.

At 19, the then-budding graffiti artist had an accident with a gun that left him with a bullet in his lower back. As a wheelchair user, he had to relearn how to live and grappled with anger, confusion and depression. He also had to rethink his approach to art.

"When I got injured, it just cemented how much I needed to be a part of the art world," Flores said. "I couldn't do graffiti in the same way anymore. I needed to find a new way to express myself, and that came through the world of fine art."

That realization led Flores to Metropolitan State University of Denver (MSU), where the 2008 Fine Arts graduate found the supportive community he needed to flourish on his journey to becoming the successful artist, activist and educator he is today.

Primarily a printmaker, Flores was showcased in the Denver Art Museum's "Untitled: Creative Fusions" series, which featured talks

and exhibitions by local artists. His art was also part of a recent exhibition at the Arvada Center called "One Sheet." In the coming months, he will turn his focus to a solo show scheduled for display at Regis University in 2024. His work is always available on his website.

### Art from the start

As a 4-year-old, Flores would watch his uncle, whom he describes as a "blue-collar artist," stitching denim jackets and etching designs onto glossy lowriders.

"I was just awed by the fact that he could create something out of nothing," Flores recalled.

But his passion for art also came out of necessity. Growing up as a non-English speaker with immigrant parents, he found that drawing was the only way he could express himself.

He recounted a story his mother often shares about a parent-teacher conference in preschool. His teacher was frustrated because Flores was always drawing in class. His mother had to explain that he was engaging through art because English wasn't his first language.

"That just shows how I've always



Alumnus Javier Flores says he wants to prove to everyone that his wheelchair is not a limitation; it's just a part of who he is. / El ex alumno Javier Flores dice que quiere demostrar a todo el mundo que su silla de ruedas no es una limitación; es sólo una parte de lo que él es.

handled everything," he said. "That was my form of expression."

### A community affair

Years later, after the injury changed his life, Flores discovered a sense of belonging at school.

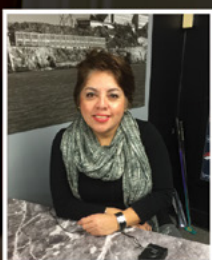
He remembers his time at MSU Denver as a transformative experience and describes the community among other Art students as foundational in shaping him as an artist. He continues to surround himself with the artists he worked

with then and take inspiration from them.

"It was the era right before the internet really took over and social media took hold of people's lives," he recalled. "We were always in the studio, always working together. We'd eat there. We'd spend the whole day there."

Please contact COLOR about upcoming community forums on the "Know Your Rights" training for immigrant families and the "What's At Stake?" information sessions regarding your health care coverage.

Contacta las oficinas de COLOR para obtener información de los próximos foros comunitarios sobre inmigración y el taller Conozca Sus Derechos. En los foros puedes saber más sobre como puede verse afectada tu cobertura médica mediante el taller ¿Qué está en juego?



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El Semanario



“

"The biggest thing I hope I've imparted on my students, whether it be spoken or nonverbal, is you need to have a passion for this. Art is not easy; it's not easy living. I try to talk to them very openly and honestly about my career and its trajectory."

Javier Flores, Artist & Professor

Flores also credits his professors and mentors at MSU Denver for the guidance that has gotten him so far. He cites the late Eldon "E.C." Cunningham, director of the University's Printmaking program, and the late Barbara Hale, an affiliate faculty member in Printmaking, as two of his most profound influences.

But perhaps the most resounding impact was made by Carlos Frésquez, professor of Art and renowned Chicano painter, whom Flores affectionately refers to as his "art dad."



## Un Artista de Colorado Inspira a los Estudiantes con su Historia de Resiliencia



Foto/Photo: Alyson McClaran for MSU RED

Javier Flores cita al difunto Eldon "E.C." Cunningham, director del programa de Grabado de la MSU de Denver, y a la difunta Barbara Hale, miembro afiliado de la facultad de Grabado, como dos de sus influencias más profundas. / Javier Flores cites the late Eldon "E.C." Cunningham, director of the MSU Denver's Printmaking program, and the late Barbara Hale, an affiliate faculty member in Printmaking, as two of his most profound influences.

Por Peyton García

La historia de Javier Flores, desde sus orígenes hasta su arte, es un testimonio de resiliencia.

A los 19 años, este grafitero en ciernes sufrió un accidente con una pistola que le dejó una bala en la parte baja de la espalda. En silla de ruedas, tuvo que volver a aprender a vivir y lidió con la ira, la confusión y la depresión. También tuvo que replantearse su enfoque del arte.

"Cuando me hirieron, me di cuenta de lo mucho que necesitaba formar parte del mundo del arte", afirma Flores. "Ya no podía hacer graffiti de la misma manera. Necesitaba encontrar una nueva forma de expresarme, y eso llegó a través del mundo de las bellas artes."

Esa toma de conciencia llevó a Flores a la Universidad Estatal Metropolitana de Denver (MSU), donde el graduado en Bellas Artes

de 2008 encontró la comunidad de apoyo que necesitaba para prosperar en su viaje hasta convertirse en el artista de éxito, activista y educador que es hoy.

Flores, que se dedica principalmente al grabado, participó en la serie "Untitled: Creative Fusions" del Museo de Arte de Denver, en la que se organizaron charlas y exposiciones de artistas locales. Su arte también formó parte de una reciente exposición en el Arvada Center titulada "One Sheet". En los próximos meses, se centrará en una exposición individual que se

exhibirá en la Regis University en 2024. Su obra está siempre disponible en [su sitio web](#).

### Arte desde el principio

Cuando tenía 4 años, Flores observaba a su tío, a quien describe como un "artista de cuello azul", cosiendo chaquetas vaqueras y grabando diseños en lustrosos lowriders.

"Me asombraba que pudiera crear algo de la nada", recuerda Flores.

Pero su pasión por el arte también surgió de la necesidad. Al crecer sin hablar inglés y con padres inmigrantes, descubrió que dibujar era la única forma que tenía de expresarse.

Contó una anécdota que su madre suele contar sobre una reunión de padres y profesores en preescolar. Su profesora estaba frustrada porque Flores siempre estaba dibujando en clase. Su madre tuvo que explicarle que se expresaba a través del arte porque el inglés no era su lengua materna.

"Eso demuestra cómo me he enfrentado siempre a todo", dice. "Esa era mi forma de expresión".

### Un asunto de comunidad

Años más tarde, después de que la lesión cambiara su vida, Flores descubrió un sentido de pertenencia en la escuela.

Recuerda su tiempo en MSU Denver como una experiencia transformadora y describe la comunidad entre otros estudiantes de Arte como fundacional para

des sociales se apoderaran de la vida de la gente", recuerda. "Siempre estábamos en el estudio, siempre trabajando juntos. Comíamos allí. Nos pasábamos el día allí".

Flores también atribuye a sus profesores y mentores en MSU Denver la orientación que le ha llevado tan lejos. Cita al difunto Eldon "E.C." Cunningham, director del programa de Grabado de la Universidad, y a Barbara Hale, miembro afiliado de la facultad de Grabado, como dos de sus influencias más profundas.

Pero quizás el impacto más rotundo lo tuvo Carlos Frésquez, profesor de Arte y reconocido pintor chicano, a quien Flores se refiere cariñosamente como su "padre artístico".

"Mi madre y mi padre eran inmigrantes en este país", explica Flores. "Mi madre era el pegamento que nos mantenía unidos. Pero pasaba mucho tiempo trabajando, intentando mantener a la familia. En ese tiempo, Carlos era una constante".

Incluso después de que Flores se graduara, Frésquez continuó defendiendo el trabajo de Flores y recomendándolo para oportunidades disponibles - que es cómo

Flores finalmente se encontró de vuelta en MSU Denver como profesor afiliado.



"Lo más importante que espero haber transmitido a mis alumnos, ya sea de forma verbal o no verbal, es que hay que tener pasión por esto. El arte no es fácil; no es fácil vivir. Intento hablarles muy abierta y honestamente de mi carrera y su trayectoria."

Javier Flores, Artista y Profesor

### Inspiración para futuros artistas

Ahora, como profesor a tiempo completo y director de la facultad de Arte del Front Range Community College, Flores sirve de guía a los jóvenes y esperanzados creativos de la próxima generación.

Intenta crear el mismo sentido de comunidad y camaradería para

Vea [Resiliencia](#), página 22





State News / Noticias del Estado

# Nonprofit Discusses Lawsuit Against Park Hill Golf Course Developers

COLORADO

By Benjamin Neufeld

After a lease agreement based on allegedly misrepresented terms, cost a Colorado nonprofit thousands of dollars, their lawsuit against partnered development organizations, Westside Investment Partners and the Holleran Group, is about more than simply recovering a financial loss. "We obviously want our resources and money back," Adrienna Corrales Luján, the executive director of Sisters of Color, a Denver-based *promotora* (community health worker) program. However, more than that, they want to raise awareness and prevent the developers from taking advantage of the Denver community the same way the developers took advantage of them.

"With the developers asking the voters of Denver to let them develop the Park Hill Golf Course, Sisters of Color feels obligated to inform our community about its experience with Westside and the Holleran Group and the negative consequences from believing in their promises," the organization said in a press release.

Sisters of Color had been leasing space in the clubhouse of the controversial Park Hill Golf Course from Westside and Holleran. Westside had purchased the defunct golf course from the Clayton Foundation in 2019 with plans to eventually develop the land pending the removal of a city-owned conservation easement that, according to the language of the



Sisters of Color had been leasing space in the clubhouse of the controversial Park Hill Golf Course from Westside Investment Partners and Holleran Group. / Sisters of Color había estado alquilando espacio en la casa club del controvertido campo de golf Park Hill a Westside Investment Partners y Holleran Group.

easement, "provides for the conservation of the Golf Course Land as open space and for the continued existence and operation of a regulation-length 18-hole daily fee public golf course." Holleran joined Westside as a codeveloper in 2020.

In 2021, Denver voters passed Ballot Initiative 301 which requires city-wide voter approval to lift a conservation easement and allow for other land uses not related to that easement. During the same election, voters rejected Ballot Initiative 302 which would redefine "conservation easement" in order to exempt the Park Hill Golf Course from the provisions set forth by Ordinance 301. This April, Denver voters will decide whether to lift the Park Hill Golf Course easement and allow Westside/Holleran to develop the land. In the meantime, following a series of public comment sessions, the city has developed an area plan intended to guide the develop-

ment of the land if voters decide to lift the easement.

Westside and Holleran present themselves as willing and active partners of the Park Hill Community. The City of Denver, under the Hancock administration, agrees and echoes this presentation. According to [denvergov.org](https://denvergov.org), Westside, "prioritizes a development process that lifts up communities and celebrates their histories," and Holleran, "is a collaborative partnership of African American real estate developers, brokers, community outreach specialists and event and project managers...[that] believe in creating equitable opportunities."

As an organization interested in non-traditional, equity-based methods of development and community building, Sisters of Color was excited to work with supposedly like-minded developers to help uplift the Park Hill and greater Denver community. Sisters of Col-

or had also previously worked with Tyrone Hubbard, who later joined Holleran, according to Luján. And, they had worked with organizations affiliated with Westside to financially sponsor some events related to raising support for Ballot Initiative 302, when they had still supported the golf course development plan.

On top of that, Sisters of Color was planning on eventually moving their organization into a much larger space on the Loretto Heights campus, which is also owned by Westside. Their lease was up for a space they were using on 8th Ave. and Santa Fe Dr. when the golf course clubhouse became available. The clubhouse—which was larger than their current space, and which they knew they could only use temporarily—made sense to use as a transitional space as they built out their organization in order to later occupy the much larger Loretto Heights space. "The vision was that we would basically create...the infrastructure over two to three years at Park Hill that would allow us to grow into that much larger space in Loretto Heights," said Luján.

The clubhouse, which had not been used for a few years, needed significant renovation in order to be usable. "It was really gross," said Luján.

Through Hubbard, Sisters of Color agreed to front the cost of that renovation in the form of advance rent payments. According to the lawsuit, "Holleran promised to modify the Clubhouse lease to reflect the fact that Sisters of Color had made advanced rent payments." They agreed to "basically fix the space up in lieu of rent," according to Luján.

Because they needed to move into a space quickly, because they had previously established a positive relationship with Hubbard (who acted on behalf of Holleran), and because Westside and Holleran represented themselves as equity-focused community partners, Sisters of Color felt comfortable moving forward with the transaction without establishing a clear agreement on how the lease terms would later be amended.

As contractors completed the renovations, Sisters of Color became increasingly excited about the potential for the space. "Over a few months we really cleaned it up, and made sure that the community was going to have a safe and clean, beautiful space in the way of a community center," said Luján.

Sisters of Color paid Holleran nearly \$150,000 for improvements to the clubhouse, more than they would have otherwise paid in rent over the three years they planned to use the building. Then, Westside and Holleran went back on their promise to factor that cost into the rent.

“

"With the developers asking the voters of Denver to let them develop the Park Hill Golf Course, Sisters of Color feels obligated to inform our community about its experience with Westside and the Holleran Group and the negative consequences from believing in their promises."

Sisters of Color

Rather than update the lease to reflect Sisters of Color's outsized financial contribution, Holleran and Westside demanded modifications which would give the developers the "exclusive right to use each of the rooms in the Sisters of Color's space for fifteen percent of each room's potential total hours of use per week," according to the lawsuit Sisters of Color later filed. They also required Sisters of Color to share a significant portion of the space with an additional tenant: a church called The House Worship Center.

Their lawsuit also alleges that, "Holleran's invoices lacked back-up documentation to verify the amounts claimed and, upon information and belief, Holleran over-billed Sisters of Color for the work performed, and/or charged Sisters of Color for work that was not done including, inter alia, charging a 10% 'project management' fee, while separately charging for 'management labor' and included duplicative billing."

Sisters of Color spent months trying to get an updated lease that would reflect the cost of renovations without their overbearing additional requests. "They wouldn't provide it for us," said Luján, which eventually led to the lawsuit.

After some negotiating the developers offered to settle and pay Sisters of Color \$173,000 in exchange for the release of all claims.

See [Lawsuit](#) on page 20

THE WEEKLY ISSUE

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## State News / Noticias del Estado

## Una Organización Sin Ánimo de Lucro Debate una Demanda Contra los Promotores Inmobiliarios



Photo/ Foto: Benjamin Neufeld for El Semanario

Los votantes de Denver decidirán el futuro de la urbanización del campo de golf de Park Hill en las elecciones municipales de abril. / Denver voters will decide the future of Park Hill Golf Course development in April's municipal election.

## COLORADO

Por Benjamin Neufeld

Después de que un contrato de arrendamiento basado en términos supuestamente tergiversados costara miles de dólares a una organización sin ánimo de lucro de Colorado, su demanda contra las organizaciones promotoras asociadas, Westside Investment Partners y Holleran Group, va más allá de la simple recuperación de una pérdida financiera. "Obviamente, queremos que nos devuelvan nuestros recursos y nuestro dinero", afirma Adrienna Corrales Luján, directora ejecutiva de Sisters of Color, un programa de promotoras (trabajadoras sanitarias comunitarias) con sede en Denver. Sin embargo, más que eso, quieren concienciar y evitar que los promotores se aprovechen de la comunidad de Denver de la misma forma que los promotores se aprovecharon de ellos.



"Ahora que los promotores piden a los votantes de Denver que les permitan desarrollar el campo de golf de Park Hill, Sisters of Color se siente obligada a informar a nuestra comunidad sobre su experiencia con Westside y el Holleran Group y las consecuencias negativas de creer en sus promesas".

Sisters of Color

"Ahora que los promotores piden a los votantes de Denver que les permitan desarrollar el campo de golf de Park Hill, Sisters of Color se siente obligada a informar a nuestra comunidad sobre su experiencia con Westside y el Holleran Group y las consecuencias negativas de creer en sus promesas", afirma la organización en un comunicado de prensa.

Sisters of Color había alquilado a Westside y Holleran espacio en la casa club del controvertido campo de golf de Park Hill. Westside había comprado el difunto campo de golf a la Fundación Clayton en 2019 con planes para desarrollar eventualmente la tierra a la espera de la eliminación de una servidumbre de conservación propiedad de la ciudad que, según el lenguaje de la servidumbre, "proporciona la conservación de la Tierra del Campo de Golf como espacio abierto y para la existencia y operación continuas de un campo de golf público de 18 hoyos de longitud reglamentaria de tarifa diaria." Holleran se unió a Westside como desarrollador de código en 2020.

En 2021, los votantes de Denver aprobaron la Iniciativa Electoral 301, que requiere la aprobación de los votantes de toda la ciudad para levantar una servidumbre de conservación y permitir otros usos del suelo no relacionados con esa servidumbre. Durante las mismas elecciones, los votantes rechazaron la Iniciativa Electoral 302 que redefiniría la "servidumbre de conservación" para eximir al campo de golf Park Hill de las disposiciones establecidas por la Ordenanza 301. El próximo mes de abril, los votantes de Denver decidirán si

## A JOYOUS SNAPSHOT OF CUBAN AND COLOMBIAN-AMERICAN CULTURE SET IN THE HEART OF MIAMI



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## Mayoral Candidates Address Unhoused Denverites at Outdoor Forum



Denver mayoral candidates heard from the city's unhoused community and advocates at a forum in front of the City and County building, on Monday, February 20.



Signs advocating for Denver's unhoused communities were placed in front of the Denver City and County building on Monday, February 20.

“When the city throws away someone's belongings, or when we lose a friend to hypothermia, overdose, or many of the health challenges from being unhoused, we share a lot of anger for unjust systems.”

Jess Wiederholt, Mutual Aid Mondays

### COLORADO

By Victoria Acuña

On Monday evening, Denver mayoral candidates had the chance to hear from and address the city's unhoused community and advocates directly.

Hosted by Mutual Aid Monday (MAM) and Housekeys Action Network Denver (HAND), unhoused folks, advocates, and the media gathered at the front of the city council building for a dual mayor-

al forum and free food and winter gear distribution. After an hour of sharing meals and conversations, 13 out of the 17 candidates on the ballot for mayor sat down to answer questions on the housing crisis, encampments and sweeps, funding for organizations and resources, and other topics related to homelessness.

An organizer for MAM, Jess Wiederholt, opened the forum. "...when the city throws away someone's belongings, or when we lose a friend to hypothermia, overdose,

or many of the health challenges from being unhoused, we share a lot of anger for unjust systems," she said. "We're called Mutual Aid Monday for a reason. Monday is the night when city council meets here. We know that those who work inside of this building have the power to change things. But guess what? So do we."

Candidates in attendance included: Lisa Calderón, Trinidad Rodríguez, Thomas Wolf, Terrance Roberts, Renate A. Behrens, Chris Hanson, Mike Johnston, Jim Walsh,

Ean Thomas Tafoya, Andy Rougeot, Leslie Herod, Robert Treta, and Denise Maes, a representative for Kelly Brough. Jesse Parris, another mayoral candidate, was invited up later, however he did not get enough signatures to be on the ballot.

All had to stand or stay seated for "yes or no" questions during the first part of the forum. For the second portion, unhoused folks in attendance asked their own questions, allowing three candidates each to respond for a minute.

When the moderator asked the candidates in the first part if they believe housing is a human right, all stood except for Andy Rougeot. People in the crowd seemed confused for a while, wondering why he was the only one still sitting—he only stood to show his support for case management funding. Once the moderator noted that fact, the crowd booed. Although the moderator had to remind the crowd to let candidates have their time

See [Forum](#) on page 17

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COLORADO

## Advocates Rally in Support of El Paso Ranchers at State Capitol



Courtney and Nicole Mallery, who own the Freedom Acres Ranch, say they have been the target of racist and destructive attacks on their ranch in El Paso County. Courtney Mallery addresses rallygoers who gathered in support of the couple at the Colorado Capitol in Denver on Feb. 17, 2023.

### COLORADO

By Sara Wilson

Supporters of a Black family who say they have been victim to racial harassment at their El Paso County ranch and discrimination from local law enforcement gathered for a rally at the Colorado Capitol in Denver on

Friday demanding a resolution to the conflict.

"I just want to farm in peace," Courtney "CW" Mallery told the crowd in Denver.

Mallery and his wife, Nicole, own land in Yoder, about 30 miles east of Colorado Springs, where they farm and ranch. They claim

See [Ranchers](#) on page 22



## Colorado Extends Free Preschool Application Deadline

### COLORADO

By Ann Schimke

Colorado has extended the deadline for families to apply for free preschool to Feb. 24.

The original deadline was Feb. 14, but state officials announced Tuesday that they would extend it by 10 days. They also said they would reopen already-submitted preschool applications starting Feb. 17 so that families can re-rank their five preschool choices or make different choices. The deadline for those families to make changes is also Feb. 24.

The application for free preschool is open. Families who fill out the application by Feb. 24 will find out what preschool their child matched with on March 30. Fill out the application [here](#).



Colorado officials will extend the deadline for the first round of free preschool applications to Feb. 24. / Colorado ha ampliado el plazo para que las familias soliciten preescolar gratuito hasta el 24 de febrero.

The last-minute extension and revision decisions come amid several stumbles that have led to confusion and frustration among parents and preschool providers as the state rushes to roll out universal preschool

by next fall. The new program, one of Gov. Jared Polis' signature priorities, will offer 10 to 30 hours a week of tuition-free class time to 4-year-olds statewide and 10 hours a week to some 3-year-olds.

## Colorado Amplía el Plazo de Solicitud de Preescolar Gratuito

### COLORADO

Por Ann Schimke

Colorado ha ampliado el plazo para que las familias soliciten preescolar gratuito hasta el 24 de febrero.

El plazo original era el 14 de febrero, pero funcionarios estatales anunciaron el martes que se extendería por 10 días. También dijo que iba a reabrir las solicitudes de preescolar ya presentadas a partir del 17 de febrero para que las familias puedan volver a clasificar sus cinco opciones de preescolar o hacer elecciones diferentes. La fecha límite para que

esas familias hagan cambios es también el 24 de febrero.

La solicitud para el preescolar gratuito está abierta. Las familias que rellenen la solicitud antes del 24 de febrero sabrán a qué centro preescolar corresponde su hijo el 30 de marzo. Rellene la solicitud [aquí](#).

La prórroga de última hora y las decisiones de revisión se producen en medio de varios tropiezos que han llevado a la confusión y la frustración entre los padres y los proveedores de preescolar como el estado se apresura a poner en marcha la educación preescolar universal para el próximo otoño. El nuevo programa, una de las priori-

dades del gobernador Jared Polis, ofrecerá entre 10 y 30 horas semanales de clases gratuitas a niños de 4 años en todo el estado y 10 horas semanales a algunos niños de 3 años.

Una portavoz del Departamento de Primera Infancia de Colorado, que gestionará el programa preescolar gratuito, dijo la semana pasada que el Estado decidió reabrir todas las solicitudes de preescolar porque algunos centros participantes no se dieron cuenta de que tenían que indicar el número de plazas que tienen en cada categoría: media jornada por

Vea [preescolar](#), página 22

## City Council Approves Purchase of New Denver Public Library Branch in Westwood

### COLORADO

Denver City Council approved the purchase of a condo unit in the Westwood community which will become the newest Denver Public Library branch. The new branch will allow the library to expand its footprint and services offered in the Westwood community. The project is part of the RISE Denver bond, which was approved by Denver voters in 2021.

"Every Denver resident deserves the same access to the services that support equity for

their families and in their neighborhoods," Mayor Michael B. Hancock said. "This purchase allows us to make good on the promise we made to Westwood residents with the RISE Denver bonds to provide a new state-of-the-art library right in the heart of their community."

The property is located at 3300 West Nevada Place, within the Westwood Redeemer development. The property, which formerly housed the Lutheran Redeemer Church, was initially purchased in 2021 by Lifespan Local, led by Dr. Lyda Prado.

Prado led a community-driven process to identify the needs of Southwest Denver residents to develop a vision for the project. The new library will be a co-created space with other neighborhood organizations providing legal support, healthy food, and well-being resources.

"The Denver Public Library is committed to meeting the needs of the Westwood community and we have been working with our partners at the City and with the community over the last several years

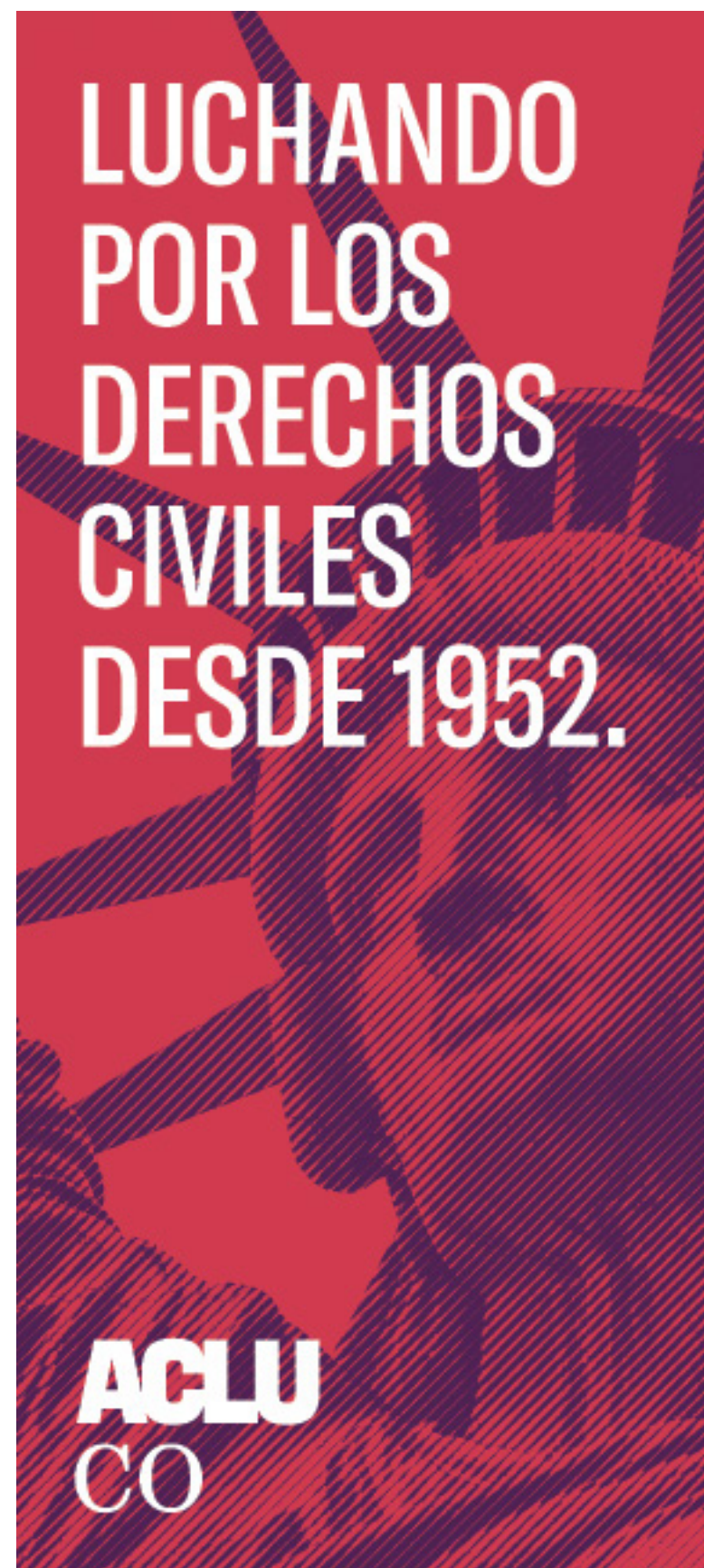
See [Library](#) on page 16

A spokeswoman for the Colorado Department of Early Childhood, which will run the free preschool program, [said last week](#) the state decided to reopen all preschool applications because some participating preschools didn't realize they had to list the number of seats they have in each category — half-day morning, half-day afternoon, full-day, and so on. Those errors meant that families may have signed up for preschool offerings that don't exist.

Although the errors affected a subset of the nearly 28,000 ap-

plicants, the department is letting all families who submitted applications make revisions because some incorrectly believed it was a first-come, first-served system and rushed through their preschool applications the day the system opened Jan. 17. In addition about 150 more preschool providers signed up to offer preschool through the new program after the application first opened, so early birds may have had fewer choices than later-submitting families.

See [Preschool](#) on page 20





## State News / Noticias del Estado

# Head Start Employees Speak Out About Unfair Compensation

### NEW MÉXICO

By Megan Taros

These days it costs \$16 for a packet of chicken big enough to feed Alma Ortiz's family. It's a big jump from what she's used to, and she has a hard time being able to afford it.

Ortiz is a single mom and early childhood teacher for Youth Development Inc., a Head Start program in Albuquerque. Her children also attend school at YDI.

Last year when Gov. Michelle Lujan Grisham announced \$3 raises for early childhood educators Ortiz and her colleagues were excited to see more money in their paychecks.

"A raise would help me with my bills, my mortgage and food for my

kids," Ortiz said in Spanish. "I'm a single mom, so that money would help us be better fed."

"We're not valued for the future we're rearing. We rear doctors, lawyers, scientists – they all had teachers. We're not viewed as professionals anymore. That hurts my heart."

Vanessa Rogers, Early Childhood Educator

Ortiz heard other educators at different programs outside YDI started getting their raises from the governor's initiative. The extra money was not making its way to

Ortiz, so she and her colleagues reached out to their bosses at YDI.

It turns out, because Head Start is a federal program that receives specific funding for its salaries, the employees at YDI were not eligible for the \$3 provided by the executive initiative.

Teachers and staff at YDI said management told them they are working on a solution to the problem, but some employees said they are "frustrated" by a "lack of communication."

Employees protested at a YDI shareholders meeting on Feb. 11 where they tried to encourage leadership to meet with the New Mexico Early Childhood Education and Child Care Department, and its Secretary Elizabeth Groginsky.

The workers said they were not allowed to speak until the meeting



The average child care employee salary is \$22,290 – that's \$2,310 below the federal poverty line. / El salario medio de un empleado de guardería es de 22.290 dólares, es decir, 2.310 dólares por debajo del umbral federal de pobreza.

was over. After a couple of hours in the meeting – and one hour waiting outside before it began – many had to leave to attend to

other obligations, employees said. The YDI staffers seeking higher

See Head Start on page 21

## Los Empleados de Head Start Denuncian una Compensación Injusta

### NEW MÉXICO

Por Megan Taros

Hoy en día cuesta 16 dólares un paquete de pollo lo suficientemente grande como para alimentar a la familia de Alma Ortiz. Es un gran salto con respecto a lo que ella estaba acostumbrada, y le cuesta mucho poder pagarlo.

Ortiz es madre soltera y profesora de educación infantil en Youth Development Inc., un programa Head Start de Albuquerque. Sus hijos también asisten a la escuela en YDI.

El año pasado, cuando la Gobernadora Michelle Lujan Grisham anunció aumentos de \$3 para los educadores de la primera infancia, Ortiz y sus colegas estaban emocionados de ver más dinero en sus cheques de pago.

"Un aumento me ayudaría con mis facturas, mi hipoteca y la comida para mis hijos", dijo Ortiz en español. "Soy madre soltera, así que ese dinero nos ayudaría a estar mejor alimentados".

Ortiz escuchó que otros educadores en diferentes programas fuera de YDI comenzaron a recibir sus aumentos gracias a la iniciativa del gobernador. El dinero extra no llegaba a Ortiz, así que ella y sus

colegas se pusieron en contacto con sus jefes en YDI.

Resulta que, debido a Head Start es un programa federal que recibe fondos específicos para sus salarios, los empleados en YDI no eran elegibles para los \$3 proporcionados por la iniciativa ejecutiva.

Los profesores y el personal de YDI dijeron que la dirección les dijo que están trabajando en una solución al problema, pero algunos empleados dijeron que están "frustrados" por una "falta de comunicación."

Los empleados protestaron en una reunión de accionistas de YDI el 11 de febrero, donde trataron de animar a la dirección a reunirse con

el Departamento de Educación Infantil y Cuidado de Niños de Nuevo México, y su Secretaria Elizabeth Groginsky.

Los trabajadores dijeron que no se les permitió hablar hasta que terminó la reunión. Tras un par de horas en la reunión – y una hora esperando fuera antes de que empezara – muchos tuvieron que marcharse para atender otras obligaciones, dijeron los empleados. Los empleados de YDI que pedían salarios más altos por hora y que hablaron con Source New Mexico expresaron que se sentían silenciados.

"Era como si no tuvieran mucha empatía por nosotros", dijo Ortiz.

"No se nos valora por el futuro que criamos. Criamos médicos, abogados, científicos... todos ellos tuvieron profesores. Ya no se nos considera profesionales. Eso me duele en el corazón".  
Vanessa Rogers, Educadora Infantil

El liderazgo de YDI dijo en un comunicado que ya se ha reunido "en varias ocasiones" con los empleados para explicarles por qué no son elegibles y ya se han reunido con Groginsky para discutir flujos de financiación alternativos.

"Youth Development, Inc. se compromete a aumentar los salarios del personal para los educadores de atención infantil temprana y nuestro personal de apoyo", decía el comunicado. "El principio rector en el que todos estamos de acuerdo es que nuestro maravilloso personal merece aumentos salariales y estamos comprometidos con ese fin".

YDI no compartió ningún plan específico sobre cómo aumentarían los salarios de los empleados por hora.

En cuanto a los 3 dólares a los que no tienen derecho, Nuevo México está financiando esos aumentos a través de una subvención llamada Competitive Pay

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## Luján Holds Highlights Federal Investments Secured for the Navajo Nation

### NEW MÉXICO

U.S. Senator Ben Ray Luján (D-N.M.) visited Aztec on Feb. 20 to hold a roundtable discussion on New Mexico's agriculture priorities for the upcoming 2023 Farm Bill. Their conversations centered on San Juan County food banks, Native American farmers, and critical extension programs to consider the 2023 Farm Bill. Following the discussion, Senator Luján toured a local farm with meeting participants.

As a member of the Senate Agriculture Committee, Senator Luján will play a vital role in creating the legislation to help ensure the USDA best serves New Mexican agriculture producers and consumers.

"Today I was fortunate to hear from more farmers, ranchers, and nutrition advocates on how the Farm Bill can be strengthened to

meet New Mexico's needs," said Luján. "San Juan County plays a central role to our state's agricultural industry and local economy, and it's critical their voices are heard brought to the table."

Senator Luján also visited with Navajo Nation Council Delegates to highlight the \$4.351 million secured to support their community needs. Luján's first meeting with Navajo Council Delegate Eugenia Charles Newton to discuss the investment secured to complete demolition and abatement of the vacant Bureau of Indian Affairs buildings in Shiprock.

"It was an honor to join Navajo Nation Councilwoman Eugenia Charles Newton to highlight over \$4 million in federal investments that I helped secure to demolish vacant BIA buildings in Shiprock to make way for new development that will drive the local economy

and provide new opportunities to local business owners," said Luján.

Following their discussion, Luján met with Navajo Nation Councilwoman Amber Kanazbah Crotty to highlight \$25,000 secured for the Missing and Murdered Dine Relatives Relief Fund, which provides direct financial assistance for Diné families affected by the Missing and Murdered Indigenous People (MMIP) crisis in San Juan, McKinley and Cibola counties. Senator Luján's Native Youth and Tribal Officer Protection Act was signed into law last year as part of the Violence Against Women Act Reauthorization to strengthen the federal government's efforts to combat violence against Native communities and Tribal Nations.

"For too long, Indigenous people have been disappearing from their communities and taken from their loved ones. Every one of those



U.S. Senator Ben Ray Luján (D-N.M.) visited Aztec to hold a roundtable discussion on New Mexico's agriculture priorities for the upcoming 2023 Farm Bill.

individuals has a name, a home, and a right to justice. That's why I was proud to secure funding to support the Missing and Murdered Dine Relatives Relief Fund – providing funding for facility costs, legal fees, search and rescue efforts, and community support for those

in need," said Luján. "As a member on the Senate Committee on Indian Affairs, I will continue working to combat the crisis of Missing and Murdered Indigenous People."

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## Sierra Club Supporters Submit More than 16,000 Comments to EPA

### NEW MÉXICO

The public comment period for the Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA) proposed supplemental rule aimed at cutting methane and other emissions from the oil and gas sector ended February 13th. The broad coalition of methane rule supporters submitted more than 400,000 comments, more than 16,000 of which came from Sierra Club members and supporters, urging EPA to further strengthen the draft rule and quickly finalize, by summer at the latest, and implement it so communities can realize its emission reduction benefits as soon as possible.

While the comments supported the supplemental rule, which is an improvement over the original draft from 2021, they also urged EPA to impose greater limits on the harmful practice of flaring. These restraints are critical to ensure the strongest possible methane safeguards to mitigate climate change and protect public health. EPA must also widen standards to address emissions from storage tanks and improve and clarify ways in which communities and individuals can report large leaks.

Methane is a potent greenhouse gas that has more than 80 times the heat-trapping power of carbon dioxide over a 20-year period, driving approximately one-third of the warming our planet has experienced to date. Each year, the

U.S. oil and gas sector emits 16 million metric tons of methane, alongside other damaging and harmful pollutants, into our atmosphere.

In January, over three days of public hearings, 289 advocates across 33 states and 110 organizations testified in support of a strong methane rule. Along with the written comments, it should now be clear to EPA that finalizing maximally protective safeguards against methane pollution from the oil and gas industry is essential to advancing environmental justice, slowing the rate of climate change, and keeping everyone's air clean and safe to breathe.

"The response to EPA during this public comment period leaves no question: the agency must strengthen and finalize the strongest possible methane rule as swiftly as possible to protect clean air and ensure a stable climate and healthy communities," Senior Director of Energy Campaigns Kelly Sheehan said. "During the public hearings and this comment period, EPA heard from people who have experienced the harmful impacts of pollution from oil and gas drilling firsthand, who live and work on the frontlines of the climate crisis, and who are counting on the agency to hold these fossil fuel companies accountable. Many of these communities live in states where political leaders have failed to prioritize community protections. We urge EPA—for the benefit of our families, economy, and climate—to

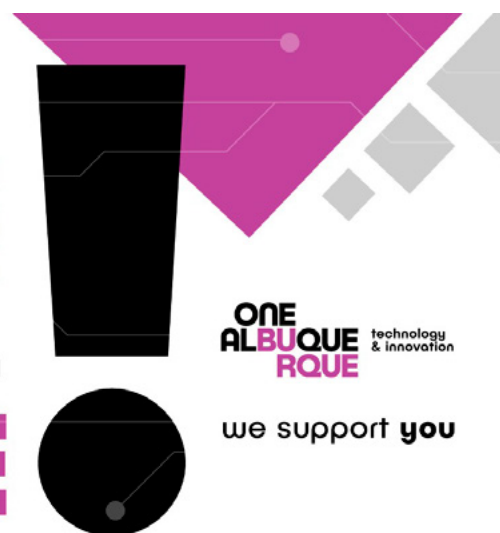
incorporate these recommendations into the final rule and to enact the strongest safeguards possible without delay. Nothing less than our lives and planet depends on it."

Sierra Club Rio Grande Chapter Organizer Antoinette Reyes said: "It has been more than a year since its initial introduction, so we are looking forward to the finalization of

EPA's methane rule after hundreds of thousands of comments showed clear support for a strong rule that

See [Sierra](#) on page 22

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los derechos de los trabajadores del campo que, al sol de hoy, a pesar de los avances siguen sin recibir un trato justo, comenzando con la legalización de quienes son indocumentados. De hecho, se sabe que más del 30% de los campesinos en Estados Unidos son mexicanos o de origen mexicano y que su poder adquisitivo es de alrededor de \$881 mil millones, lo que representa el 57.2% del poder adquisitivo total de la población latina del país. Pero hay políticos republicanos que quisieran esconder esos datos contundentes. "Mi abuelo paterno estuvo en las marchas con César Chávez, fue su escolta; y mi padre, desde los siete años, ha trabajado en el campo y todavía sigue haciéndolo. Andaban en las corridas (cosechas de temporada) siempre", recuerda Eva. De tal modo que ella no duda en llamar a Chávez "nuestro líder". Pues gracias a él, añade, "tenemos privilegios que antes no teníamos. Su legado es importantísimo. A los niños se les enseña la historia y ellos van apreciando su legado".

Así, para ella es indignante que los políticos, por una parte, acusen a los inmigrantes de todos los males, y por otra hagan promesas que no cumplen. Dice: "Es injusto que no le

den solución a los problemas que tenemos aquí en la frontera. Que vengan a sacarse la foto bonita, pero que (también) tomen cartas en el asunto, porque las personas necesitan la legalización. Trabajan duro con la esperanza de que pronto va a haber una solución". En efecto, no hay un reflejo directamente proporcional entre el gran esfuerzo de miles de seres humanos como Eva y el poco resultado que ha dado la clase política estadounidense a un simple anhelo: el de ser reconocidos plenamente ante la ley como parte de la sociedad en la que se encuentran enraizados durante ya varias generaciones que reconocen como hogar a este país que los utiliza —económica, laboral y políticamente—, pero que no los acepta por completo. Y en ello asoma siempre el espectro del racismo y de la discriminación que emana de la retórica tradicional republicana.

"Muchos en mi familia arreglaron sus papeles con la amnistía (de 1986), pero antes de eso lucharon fuerte (sin documentos) y dejaron huella, porque el trabajo en el campo no es fácil", enfatiza Eva. Y agrega: "Todos los que trabajamos en el campo aportamos un granito a la economía del país, porque

sin nosotros sería diferente... pues en el campo no vas a mirar a un americano cortando una lechuga o aventando brócoli para que se empaque. No. Nosotros somos los que luchamos y llevamos a la mesa todos los vegetales".

En las palabras de Eva se confirma una realidad ineludible: que "del total de trabajadores de origen mexicano, ocho de cada diez nacieron en México y dos son hijos, nietos o descendientes más lejanos de inmigrantes mexicanos que ya nacieron en Estados Unidos", como indica el estudio "Esenciales pero vulnerables", de la Universidad de California. "Cada vez que hacen promesas de que esta vez sí (viene la reforma), se ilusionan y después no pasa nada y viene la tristeza", lamenta Eva. Y explica: "Ellos vienen a este

país a trabajar y a luchar. A sacar a sus familias adelante. Y están esperanzados en obtener un documento para ir a sus países a ver a sus familias y regresar acá a seguir luchando y aportando al país. Es triste. Vas a ver gente trabajando en el campo que son bien mayores. De 80 años, de 85 años, le echan ganas y todavía tienen la esperanza de tener un documento". Por su parte, José Flores, organizador de la Fundación de la Unión de Campesinos (UFWF) en Arizona, indica que una de las misiones del sindicato es precisamente "alzar las voces y las historias de la gente de la frontera".

Y sostiene José: "Se pinta un cuadro de que es un lugar peligroso y sin control, y aquí en San Luis la historia es muy diferente. Es una comunidad donde la gente cru-

za la frontera a diario para ir a las tiendas, a la escuela, a trabajar". Además, él lo deja bien claro: "En marzo, la vida y el legado de César Chávez se celebran en San Luis, (porque) la comunidad sigue celebrando a César Chávez". De tal modo que a José le gustaría que el Congreso escuchara a la gente que vive ahí, a los trabajadores. Porque, en su opinión, esos políticos "vienen de afuera, de Washington, D.C., a decir lo que quieren decir, pero nunca se conectan con la comunidad".

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

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#### Webber

ty directly and, at the same time, addresses education and job training. It hits every corner of the triangle. It breaks the cycle of generational poverty.

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With that good job comes upward mobility. Your kids see that staying in school and getting job training means you've got a better life. One generation teaches the next about opportunity, upward mobility, and real possibilities. That's how you break the iron triangle. That's what we're doing it Santa Fe. What we need is a statewide version of our Mayors for a Guaranteed Income project.

Poverty isn't inevitable. We can use our wealth to end poverty.

**Alan Webb serves as Mayor of Santa Fe, New Mexico.**

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#### Library

to expand our space and services in the area," said Michelle Jeske, city librarian. "We are grateful to Denver voters for approving the RISE Denver bond in 2021, which allows us to be a part of this dynamic new space."

The new branch will complement the existing Westwood Branch Library, which, at 900 square feet, is the smallest library in the Denver Public Library system. The new location will be approximately 6,000 square feet and will provide the community with a larger collection of library materials, greater access to technology, community meeting spaces and services geared toward families, youth, immigrants, refugees and job seekers.

The \$5,950,000 purchase price includes tenant finishes. Construction on the facility is underway and the library hopes to open the new location in 2024.

The existing branch and new branch are located in a neighborhood identified as needing additional library services in the Denver Public Library's 2017 Facilities Master Plan.

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# PODCAST



cause we have to harvest the fields and move our families forward." And this immigrant is very correct, as this hard work is directly reflected in the enormous agricultural production that has made the United States a leader in this sector of the country—capable of contributing some \$175 billion to the Gross Domestic Product (GDP) in 2020, along with the fishing and forest industry, according to New American Economy. In 2018, for example, the U.S. was the nation that produced the most corn, 392 tons—all that and more through thousands of hard working immigrant families who are constantly erased and attacked, like the most extreme wing of the Republican Party—entrenched now as the majority in Congress—will attempt to do again in Yuma. Eva comes from a family of farm workers originally from Sonora. Her grandfather, Juan Robles, worked and marched with Chávez, the leader who headed up the fight for farmworker rights that, despite some advances, continues to this day without fair treatment, starting with the legalization of those who are undocumented. In fact, it is known that more than 30% of the farmworkers in the United States are Mexican or of Mexican descent and their purchasing power is around \$881 billion, which represents 57% of the Latino community's total purchasing power in the country. But there are Republican politicians who would like to hide these hard facts. "My paternal grandfather attended the marches with César Chávez, he was his honor guard. My father has worked in the fields from the age of seven, and continues to do so. They were always on the seasonal harvest circuit," Eva recalls. She does not hesitate to call Chávez "our leader." It's thanks to him, she adds, that "we have privileges we didn't have before. His legacy is extremely important. They teach this history to children and they appreciate his legacy." That's why she is so angry that politicians who, on one hand, accuse immigrants of everything bad, and on the other make promises they don't follow through on. She says "It's unjust that they don't provide a solution to the problems we have here at the border. They can come and take a pretty photo, but they should also take notes about the matter, because people need legalization. They work hard with the hope that soon there will be a solution." Indeed, there is no directly proportional reflection between the huge effort of thousands of hu-

man beings like Eva and the stingy result the U.S. political class has given to this basic desire: the fact of simply being recognized under the law as part of a society where they have been rooted now for several generations, who consider this country that uses them—economically, physically, and politically—to be home, although it doesn't completely accept them. This and the specter of racism and discrimination that emanates from traditional Republican rhetoric. "Many people in my family fixed their papers with the amnesty [of 1986], but before that they fought hard [without documents] and left their mark, because working in the fields is not easy," Eva emphasizes. She adds: "All of us who work in the fields contribute a little bit to the country's economy, and without us things would be different... In the fields you're not going to see any U.S. American cutting lettuce or handling broccoli to be packed. No. It's us who work hard and bring all those vegetables to the table." Eva's words confirm an indelible reality: that "among all workers of Mexican descent, eight out of ten were born in México and two are children, grandchildren, or other relatives of Mexican immigrants, born in the United States," according to the study "Essential But Vulnerable" from the University of California. "Every time they promise that yes, this time [immigration law reform] is coming, they get excited and then nothing happens and sadness comes," Eva laments. She explains: "They come to this country to work and to struggle. To move their families forward. And they are hoping to obtain a document in order to go to their countries, see their families, and return here to continue struggling and supporting the nation. It's sad. You will see people working in the fields who are very old, 80, 85 years old. But they are still eager and hold out the hope of having that document." For his part José Flores, organizer for the United Farm Workers Foundation (UFWF) in Arizona says that one of the union's missions is precisely to "raise the voices and the histories of people along the border." And, José holds, "They paint a picture like this is a dangerous and out of control place, and here in San Luis the story is very different. It's a community where people cross the border on a daily basis to go to stores, school, to work." On top of that, he makes it very clear: "In March, César Chávez' life and legacy is celebrated in San Luis, because the community continues to celebrate César Chávez."

In fact, José would like Congress to hear from the people who live here, the workers. Because, in his opinion, those politicians "come from outside, from Washington, DC, to say what they want to say, but they never connect with the community."

**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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#### Forum

here and there, folks were very engaged in the forum, at times trying to hold candidates accountable against dodgy answers.

During the Q&A portion, unhoused folks brought up shelter conditions and curfews, drug addiction and mental health treatment, and funding for the organizers that advocate for them. Ean Thomas Tafoya said, in response to shelter questions, that "we have to be moving away from sheltering people in this congregate living. It's not working for people, I hear this on a regular basis."

One attendee asked, "Are you in support of sweeps or not?", giving candidates to opportunity to share their stance on this issue in depth. Andy Rougeot answered first, to resounding boos. "I will enforce the camping ban to get people into the mental health and drug services they need... It is not humane to step over someone else's tent, it is not humane to see someone overdose in a tent and say the answer is to leave them alone."

Denver enacted a camping ban in 2012 under Denver Mayor Michael Hancock, where the 10 years that have passed since its enforcement has been dubbed the "decade of doom". Proponents of the ban claimed that it would get people into housing. Denver has greatly fallen behind when it comes to affordable housing.

Candidate Robert Treta sees affordable housing as his number one issue. "You will have a private place to live, and I will build it myself if I have to."

You can watch the entire forum on Mutual Aid Monday's Instagram profile. Ballots will be mailed out on March 13. Election Day, the last day to vote, is April 4.

**Victoria Acuña is an Independent Reporter for The Weekly Issue/El Semanario.**

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#### Thunder Hawk

— was as a medic. We each had different bunkers to cover in case someone got shot. I was assigned four bunkers on the south side. Every night, it was nonstop activity. People would sneak in and out, hiding in the grass, bringing food and other supplies. Many were arrested. In that situation, you're just trying to make sure everyone's alive and healthy. If you couldn't find someone, you wondered if they'd been killed or taken to jail.

During this time, I met Danny Sheehan, who would go on to lead several seminal legal justice fights and become our Lakota Law president and chief counsel. During the standoff, Danny was staying with my brother-in-law, Herman Thunder Hawk, in the house where we monitored government communications via CB radio. He was among many legal volunteers who showed up when it mattered most, and he stayed busy prepping criminal defenses for our people. It's notable that no one was ever convicted after the standoff. All charges were eventually dismissed because of prosecutorial misconduct. The FBI had illegally wiretapped attorneys.

Those weeks under siege were hard, but they were worth it. We took a stand that mattered, and we held the world's attention on nightly

newscasts. We inspired later land-back and occupy movements, and we formed connections that last until the present day. 32 years later, in 2005 — when South Dakota's Department of Social Services wouldn't stop taking our children — Russell urged me to talk with Danny again, leading to the founding of Lakota Law. We've been in this fight together, off and on, for half a century. And you, too, are part of this movement! I invite you to commemorate the Wounded Knee 50th anniversary in Rapid City with us this weekend. Please keep an eye on our social channels for livestreams and other updates. *Wopila tanka* — My deep appreciation for your solidarity!

**Madonna Thunder Hawk is the Cheyenne River Organizer for The Lakota Peoples Law Project.**

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litical voting block, they could fundamentally shift the economic architecture of the country towards programs that lift poor and low-wage people.

In recent weeks, Selma has been hit by a major tornado, exposing the poverty and vulnerability that still exists in this community that has been the backdrop for so many commemorations. The country must make a decision. Mr. President, you must make a decision. Congress must decide if we are going to address the crisis of poverty by confronting the denial of voting rights that prevents a majority in Congress from enacting the change that is needed.

Voting rights were not highlighted in this year's State of the Union, but we have less voting rights protections today than we had August 6, 1965. Economic investment in the South and places like Selma was not a central theme in this year's State of the Union, but we know that if you suppress votes and block living wages, poor people of every race suffer and the promise of democracy is undermined.

Poor and low-income people now make up more than 112 million people in this country—a number that is only temporarily down from 140 million because of anti-pover-

ty measures that are already expiring. Every Southern state has more than 20% of its population that lives in poverty and low-wealth conditions. When you disaggregate that by race, the numbers are staggering.

The question before us cannot simply be whether we will take the path of extremists who call themselves Republicans and want to roll as much as they can backwards and cut as much as they can, except for tax breaks to their corporate friends; or the path of Democrats, who rightfully celebrate things that have been accomplished but then fail to highlight the crisis in voting, poverty, wages, and economic development, particularly in the South—in rural places like Selma, where we go to remember what was done in the past but do not bring a plan for what must be done now.

If the President or other politicians are going to come to Selma, they should come on Bloody Sunday, when John Lewis and others were beaten and almost killed, to declare that the fight for voting rights and the restoration of what they marched across that bridge for is not over. They should pledge to restore and expand voting rights. They should come to say that they will intensify the battle for living

wages that Dr. King talked about at the end of the Selma to Montgomery March; intensify economic investment in rural areas. Maybe the President and members of his cabinet can bring resources to present on that sacred Sunday to the people of Selma who have been devastated by disaster.



Voting rights were not highlighted in this year's State of the Union, but we have less voting rights protections today than we had August 6, 1965.

We caution all politicians who have done little or even blocked the restoration of the Voting Rights Act but want to come down for a photo op on Saturday and undermine the sacredness of Sunday; who want to come and say they honor those who were beaten on that bridge and they recognize what was done back then while they are actively undermining democracy right now.

There is such a thing as hypocrisy, and just as the President wisely

called out extremism on Social Security and Medicaid for the whole world to see, he should challenge anyone who claims to honor Bloody Sunday to make clear where they stand on restoring the Voting Rights. One study says 50 million Americans—not just Black people—are being suppressed in some way or another by the voter suppression

measures that have been passed since the Supreme Court gutted the Voting Rights Act in its 2013 Shelby decision.

Voter suppression hurts Black people and white people; Asians and Latinos; gay people, disabled people, and working people. We hear a lot of talk about threats to our democracy, but what is more of a threat to a democracy than voter suppression and the refusal to fully protect the 15th amendment and the 14th amendment's guarantee of equal protection?

There are those who say that the way to make change is to increase turnout in elections. But the very point of redistricting is to undermine the power of the vote so that even if you have a massive turnout, those votes are so isolated into certain districts that they do not change the balance of power in legislative bodies. That is the whole point of gerrymandering.

Those of us who are planning to be in Selma to honor the struggle for voting rights and economic justice should be willing to protest and engage nonviolently if politicians attempt to do moral harm to the memory and the sacredness of what happen on Bloody Sunday. We send this open letter because we care about the heart and soul and future of this nation. This is no time for foolishness, photo ops, and flaky commitments.

Let us be clear: to honor the memory of Bloody Sunday is to work for the full restoration of the Voting Rights Act, the passage of the original For the People Act that John Lewis helped to write, not the bill that was watered down by Joe Manchin who wouldn't even vote for his own compromise. To commemorate Bloody Sunday is to commit to raising of the minimum wage to a living wage, to ensuring that every American has adequate healthcare, and to enacting economic development that touches poor and low wealth communities.

We cannot have a severed morality. 700 people are dying every day from poverty and the effects of poverty that could be changed with policy adjustments that would benefit everybody. 87 million people are still uninsured or underin-

sured at a time when we have more people on healthcare than ever before. Essential workers who saved us during COVID still do not have living wages and paid family leave. Some of them have said, "We were told we were essential, but when we don't have paid family leave and can't afford insurance and our voting rights are under attack and we can't live on what we're earning, we feel expendable."

If you are serious about Selma and serious about this Democracy, then come on Sunday to commemorate Bloody Sunday and pledge to restore and expand voting rights. While regressive policies try to take us backward over the Edmund Pettus Bridge, we need leaders who know what is right, regardless of your party, to say forward together, not one step back! We need leaders willing to make public their commitment to intensify the struggle for voting rights and living wages.

Selma is sacred ground. It is, in a very real sense, the delivery room where the possibility of a true democracy was born. It is no place to play or to be for political pretense. Either you're serious or not. If you're coming, come on Sunday, the actual day of remembrance. If you're coming, come with a commitment to fight for what these people were willing to give their lives for.

Mr. President, we hope to see you in Selma on Bloody Sunday. But, more importantly, we hope to see what Frederick Douglass called an intensification of the struggle to get done what the Constitution says must be done; what the Declaration of Independence says should be done, most of all, what God requires of us. If you come to stand with us, we will stand with you and work together until we become the nation we have never yet been.

*Bishop William J. Barber, II, President, Repairers of the Breach Co-Chair, Poor People's Campaign: A National Call for Moral Revival; Rev. Dr. Liz Theoharis, Director, Kairos Center for Religions, Rights, and Social Justice, Co-Chair of the Poor People's Campaign: A National Call for Moral Revival; Senator Hank Sanders, Former Alabama State Senator, Civil Rights Activist; Faya Rose Toure, J.D., Civil Rights Activist; Rev. Mark Thompson, Civil Rights Activist; Rebecca Marion, Board Chair, Bridge Crossing Jubilee Board; and Rev. Carolyn Foster, Tri-chair, Alabama Poor People's Campaign.*

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levantan la servidumbre del campo de golf de Park Hill y permiten a Westside/Holleran urbanizar los terrenos. Mientras tanto, tras una serie de sesiones de comentarios públicos, la ciudad ha desarrollado un plan de zona destinado a guiar el desarrollo de los terrenos si los votantes deciden levantar la servidumbre.

Westside y Holleran se presentan como socios voluntariosos y activos de la comunidad de Park Hill. La ciudad de Denver, bajo la administración Hancock, está de acuerdo y se hace eco de esta presentación. Según [denvergov.org](http://denvergov.org), Westside, "da prioridad a un proceso de desarrollo que eleva a las comunidades y celebra sus historias", y Holleran, "es una asociación colaborativa de promotores inmobiliarios afroamericanos, agentes, especialistas en divulgación comunitaria y gestores de eventos y proyectos... [que creen] en la creación de oportunidades equitativas".

Como organización interesada en métodos de desarrollo y construcción de comunidades no tradicionales y basados en la equidad, Sisters of Color estaba entusiasmada con la idea de trabajar con promotores inmobiliarios supuestamente afines para ayudar a mejorar Park Hill y la comunidad de Denver. Según Luján, Sisters of Color también había trabajado anteriormente con Tyrone Hubbard, que más tarde se unió a Holleran. Además, habían trabajado con organizaciones afiliadas a Westside para patrocinar financieramente algunos actos relacionados con la obtención de apoyo para la Iniciativa electoral 302, cuando aún apoyaban el plan de desarrollo del campo de golf.

Además de eso, Sisters of Color estaba planeando trasladar su organización a un espacio mucho más grande en el campus de Loretto Heights, que también es propiedad de Westside. Su contrato de arrendamiento de un espacio que estaban utilizando en la 8ª Avenida y Santa Fe Dr. cuando la casa club del campo de golf quedó disponible. La casa club, que era más grande que su espa-

cio actual y que sabían que sólo podrían utilizar temporalmente, tenía sentido para utilizarla como espacio de transición mientras desarrollaban su organización con el fin de ocupar más tarde el espacio mucho más grande de Loretto Heights. "La idea era crear... una infraestructura en Park Hill durante dos o tres años que nos permitiera crecer y ocupar un espacio mucho mayor en Loretto Heights", explica Luján.

La sede del club, que no se utilizaba desde hacía varios años, necesitaba una renovación importante para poder usarse. "Estaba realmente asqueroso", dijo Luján.

A través de Hubbard, Sisters of Color accedió a sufragar el coste de esa renovación en forma de pagos anticipados del alquiler. Según la demanda, "Holleran prometió modificar el contrato de arrendamiento del Clubhouse para reflejar el hecho de que Sisters of Color había hecho pagos anticipados de alquiler". Aceptaron "básicamente arreglar el espacio a cambio del alquiler", según Luján.

Debido a que necesitaban mudarse a un espacio rápidamente, porque habían establecido previamente una relación positiva con Hubbard (que actuó en nombre de Holleran), y porque Westside y Holleran se representaban a sí mismos como socios comunitarios centrados en la equidad, Sisters of Color se sintió cómoda avanzando con la transacción sin establecer un acuerdo claro sobre cómo se modificarían posteriormente los términos del contrato de arrendamiento.

A medida que los contratistas completaban las renovaciones, Sisters of Color se entusiasmaba cada vez más con el potencial del espacio. "A lo largo de unos meses, realmente lo limpiamos y nos aseguramos de que la comunidad iba a disponer de un espacio seguro, limpio y hermoso como centro comunitario", afirma Luján.

Sisters of Color pagó a Holleran casi 150.000 dólares por las mejoras del club, más de lo que habrían pagado de alquiler durante los tres años que tenían previsto utilizar el edificio. Luego, Westside y Holle-

ran incumplieron su promesa de incluir ese coste en el alquiler.

En lugar de actualizar el contrato de arrendamiento para reflejar la desmesurada contribución financiera de Sisters of Color, Holleran y Westside exigieron modificaciones que otorgaran a los promotores el "derecho exclusivo a utilizar cada una de las habitaciones del espacio de Sisters of Color durante el quince por ciento de las horas potenciales de uso total de cada habitación".



"Sólo queremos que la gente sepa que se trata de una práctica depredadora de desarrollo. Si están dispuestos a hacer eso a una organización bien establecida, ¿cuál crees que es el potencial de la comunidad realmente conseguir una voz justa en este proceso?"

Adrienna Corrales Luján,  
Sisters of Color

de las posibles horas de uso de cada sala a la semana", según la demanda que Sisters of Color presentó posteriormente. También obligaron a Sisters of Color a compartir una parte importante del espacio con otro inquilino: una iglesia llamada The House Worship Center.

Su demanda también alega que "las facturas de Holleran carecían de documentación de respaldo para verificar los importes reclamados y, según la información y la creencia, Holleran facturó en exceso a Sisters of Color por el trabajo realizado, y/o cobró a Sisters of Color por un trabajo que no se hizo, incluyendo, entre otras cosas, el cobro de una tarifa del 10% por "gestión del proyecto", mientras que cobraba por separado por "mano de obra de gestión" e incluía la facturación duplicada".

Sisters of Color pasó meses intentando conseguir un contrato de arrendamiento actualizado que re-

flejara el coste de las renovaciones sin sus prepotentes peticiones adicionales. "No nos lo facilitaron", afirma Luján, lo que finalmente dio lugar a la demanda.

Tras algunas negociaciones, los promotores ofrecieron llegar a un acuerdo y pagar a Sisters of Color 173.000 dólares a cambio de la liberación de todas las demandas. Sin embargo, según el acuerdo, los promotores podrían reclamar el pago como donación benéfica, lo que, además de ser deducible de impuestos, les ayudaría a desarrollar su imagen de verdaderos socios de la comunidad mientras intentan convencer a los votantes de que levanten la servidumbre de conservación en abril.

Dar a conocer la falta de sinceridad de esa imagen es la prioridad de la demanda, y por eso la oferta de acuerdo, aunque habría compensado los daños financieros, no era aceptable. "Creo que el sofisma es realmente lo que permite que sigan produciéndose estos desafíos sistémicos", dijo Luján. Este patrón de deshonestidad por parte de los promotores con la única intención de extraer beneficios económicos de las comunidades, a menudo en detrimento de las mismas, "no es nada diferente de lo que ha estado ocurriendo en Denver". Luján relacionó esta práctica con un "trauma sistémico e histórico de arrebato de tierras indígenas a las comunidades". También señaló la importancia simbólica de cómo Westside/Holleran trató a una organización comunitaria mucho más pequeña, dirigida por una mujer de color.

En su campaña para aprobar la iniciativa electoral 302, Westside y Holleran habían utilizado el lema "proteger las opciones locales y las voces locales", dando a entender que permitir que la ciudad en su conjunto votara sobre el destino del campo de golf de Park Hill era una forma de negar la voluntad de los habitantes del barrio de Park Hill. Una entrada de blog en el sitio web de Holleran (su única entrada de blog) de finales de octubre de 2021 dice: "La iniciativa electoral 302 es una respuesta directa a una medida presentada por SOS

Denver para quitar la voz a todo un barrio que ha sido sistemáticamente privado de sus derechos durante más de 50 años. Esta iniciativa confusa y deliberadamente engañosa dice apoyar los espacios abiertos, pero es un intento directo de detener el proceso de visión de la comunidad en el campo de golf de Park Hill."

Luján y Sisters of Color se habían mostrado inicialmente optimistas sobre este proceso de visión. Después de su experiencia directa de trabajo con Westside y Holleran, este ya no es el caso. "Creo que tenía mucho más potencial, pero es lo que es", dijo Luján.

Ahora, Sisters of Color quiere advertir al resto de la comunidad que no se fie de los mensajes de asociación con la comunidad procedentes de los promotores. "Sólo queremos que la gente sepa que se trata de una práctica depredadora de desarrollo", dijo Luján. "Si están dispuestos a hacer eso a una organización bien establecida, ¿cuál crees que es el potencial de la comunidad realmente conseguir una voz justa en este proceso?"

Desde el 23 de enero, el Ayuntamiento ha avanzado un plan de área para el campo de golf de Park Hill y "ha votado para aprobar un paquete regulador que creará requisitos legalmente vinculantes para la propiedad del campo de golf de Park Hill". Este plan y el acuerdo entrarán en vigor si se aprueba la votación sobre el levantamiento de la servidumbre de conservación durante las elecciones municipales del 4 de abril.

El juicio contra Westside y Holleran se celebrará esta primavera. Ni Holleran ni Westside respondieron a la solicitud de comentarios de *The Weekly Issue/El Semanario* sobre esta historia a tiempo para su publicación.

**Benjamin Neufeld es un Reportero Independiente para The Weekly Issue/El Semanario. Traducido por Juan Carlos Uribe, The Weekly Issue/El Semanario.**

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Photo/Foto: Benjamin Neufeld for El Semanario

The Park Hill Golf Course is located in northeast Denver. Voters will decide on the controversial plans to remove a city-owned conservation easement in the upcoming municipal election on April 4.

However, according to the agreement, the developers would be permitted to claim the settlement as a charitable donation--which, in addition to being tax deductible, would assist in developing their image as being true community-partners as they try to convince voters to lift the conservation easement in April.

Bringing awareness to the insincerity of that image is the priority of the lawsuit, which is why the

settlement offer, though it would have made up for financial damages, was not acceptable. "I believe sophistry is really what allows these systemic challenges to keep occurring," said Luján. This pattern of dishonesty on behalf of developers intending, solely, to extract financial gain out of communities, often at the detriment of those communities, "isn't anything different than what has been happening in Denver." Luján related the prac-

tice back to a "systemic and historical trauma of Indigenous land being taken from communities." She also noted the symbolic significance of how Westside/Holleran treated a much smaller, woman of color led community organization.

In their campaign to pass ballot initiative 302, Westside and Holleran had used the slogan, "protect local choices and local voices," implying that allowing the city as a whole to vote on the fate of the

“

"We just want to let people know that this is a predatory practice of development. If they're willing to do that to a well-established organization, what do you think is the potential of the community actually getting a fair voice in this process?"

Adrienna Corrales Luján,  
Sisters of Color

Park Hill Golf Course was a form of denying the will of the people of the Park Hill Neighborhood. A [blog post](#) on Holleran's website (their only blog post) from late October, 2021 says, "Ballot initiative 302 is a direct response to a measure filed by SOS Denver to take away the voice of an entire neighborhood that has been systematically disenfranchised for more than 50 years. This confusing and purposefully misleading initiative claims to be in support of open space, but it's a direct attempt to stop the community visioning process at the Park Hill Golf Course."

Luján and Sisters of Color had initially been optimistic about this visioning process. After their direct experience working with Westside and Holleran, this is no longer the case. "I just think it had so much more potential, but it is what it is," Luján said.

Now, Sisters of Color wants to warn the rest of the community not to trust community-partnership messaging coming from the developers. "We just want to let people know that this is a preda-

tory practice of development," said Luján. "If they're willing to do that to a well-established organization, what do you think is the potential of the community actually getting a fair voice in this process?"

As of January 23, City Council has advanced an Area plan for the Park Hill Golf Course and "voted to approve [a regulatory package](#) that will create legally binding requirements for the Park Hill Golf Course property." This plan and agreement will go into effect if the vote on lifting the conservation easement passes during the April 4 municipal election. The lawsuit against Westside and Holleran is set to play out this Spring. Neither Holleran nor Westside responded to *The Weekly Issue/El Semanario's* request for comment on this story in time for publication.

*Benjamin Neufeld is an Independent Reporter for The Weekly Issue/El Semanario.*

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## Head Start/Esp

for Professionals, un programa federal de 77 millones de dólares financiado por la Ley del Plan de Rescate Americano.

De acuerdo con las directrices del Plan de Rescate de América para la financiación de cuidado de niños, los aumentos salariales y otros fondos no están cubiertos para los programas públicos de pre-kindergarten, Head Start y Early Head Start, ya que "por lo general operan bajo diferentes reglas del programa y las estructuras de financiación que el cuidado de niños."

Maddy Hayden, un portavoz con el gobernador dijo que la administración trabajaría a nivel federal para financiar los programas que no califican bajo esas órdenes. Hayden no dio detalles específicos sobre cómo avanzarían con esos planes.

"Desafortunadamente, estamos limitados por las restricciones de financiación federal en lo que podemos hacer para impactar directamente en los salarios de los educadores que trabajan en programas federales de educación", dijo.

Cuando la gobernadora hizo el anuncio sobre los aumentos de 3 dólares en un comunicado de prensa el 26 de octubre de 2022, asignó al departamento de educación infantil la gestión de las solicitudes de aumento salarial del personal.

Según el portavoz del departamento, Micah McCoy, la dirección sabía en ese momento que había restricciones federales que habrían impedido que personas como los trabajadores de YDI recibieran el aumento de sueldo.

Para algunos empleados de Head Start, no se trata sólo de los aumentos de 3 dólares. Se trata de recibir una compensación justa por su trabajo. Felicitas Torres-Mesa, cocinera jefe en un centro de YDI, dijo que está a cargo de hacer varias comidas al día, llenar el papeleo e incluso recoger la comida a veces.

Gana algo más de 14,50 dólares la hora. Cocinar es su pasión, dice, pero su pasión no le ayuda a pagar las facturas.

"La verdad es que nos explotan", dice Torres-Mesa en español. "¿Quién va a venir a trabajar aquí cuando puede ir a McDonald's y ganar más y no tener que hacer papeleo?"

No siempre fue así para ella. Cuando empezó hace 15 años, vivía cómodamente. Ahora tiene que pedir dinero para pagar el alquiler, las facturas y la atención médica.

"Si tuviera más dinero, no me iría a dormir por la noche preguntándome cómo voy a salir adelante al día siguiente", dice Torres-Mesa.

Muchos de sus compañeros tienen miedo de hablar. Ella ya no.

"Hay gente de más de 60 años que me dice: 'Es demasiado tarde para empezar de nuevo'", explica Torres-Mesa. "No quieren que les despidan. Así que siento que tengo que dar la cara por ellos. Tengo que alzar la voz".

Los bajos salarios son uno de los factores determinantes de la escasez de cuidadores infantiles en Estados Unidos.

Según el Centro para el Estudio del Empleo en el Cuidado Infantil de la Universidad de California Berkeley, el salario medio de los empleados de guarderías es de 22.290 dólares, es decir, 2.310 dólares por debajo del umbral federal de pobreza.

Aunque los legisladores federales están tratando de redirigir el dinero para el desarrollo profesional, esas ganancias se pierden, siempre y cuando los bajos salarios expulsan a los educadores calificados fuera del campo, dijo el centro.

Vanessa Rogers, educadora infantil en YDI, no quiere irse. Quiere hacer de YDI "el mejor lugar para trabajar". Cree que los niños a su cargo le han enseñado más de lo que ella jamás podría enseñarles y quiere que se valore su profesión por su contribución a la sociedad.

"No se nos valora por el futuro que criamos. Criamos médicos, abogados, científicos... todos ellos tuvieron profesores", afirma Rogers. "Ya no se nos considera

profesionales. Eso me duele en el corazón".

Rogers dijo que los empleados reciben aumentos, pero se basan en porcentajes. Eso significa que los empleados peor pagados son los que menos suben, y la rotación de personal es alta entre los educadores infantiles.

Recientemente, su nieta de 14 años consiguió un trabajo en atención al cliente y ahora gana más dinero que ella.

Mientras tanto, YDI está considerando la posibilidad de añadir más aulas, dijo Rogers, pero todavía está luchando para llenar las aulas que tiene ahora con el personal.

A Torres-Mesa no le sorprende. "Es lo mismo todos los años", dijo Torres-Mesa. "Dicen que lo están haciendo muy bien y que tienen todo este dinero para gastar, pero nunca lo vemos".

Rogers animó a sus colegas a "estar al lado" de quienes lideran la reivindicación de una mayor retribución, aunque tengan demasiado miedo para hablar.

Un grupo de educadores y personal de YDI se está uniendo para programar una reunión con Groginsky porque algunos dicen que se sienten abandonados en la oscuridad y necesitan tomar cartas en el asunto.

"¿Cómo podemos saber si quiera que están trabajando en estas cosas si no hablan con no-

sotros?". dijo Rogers refiriéndose a YDI. "Entiendo que el cambio lleva tiempo, pero tenéis que ser transparentes".

*Megan Taros es reportera independiente de Source New Mexico. Este artículo ha sido publicado por Source New Mexico bajo una licencia Creative Commons.*

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

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## Preschool

The state has promised to send families who submit their preschool applications by Feb. 24 an email on March 30 informing them which preschool their child matched with and what steps they should take to enroll. Families can still apply for preschool after Feb. 24, but they'll be informed of their matches at a later date.

*Ann Schimke is a senior reporter at Chalkbeat. This story was originally published by Chalkbeat.*

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## Head Start

hourly wages who spoke with Source New Mexico expressed that they felt silenced.

"It was like they didn't have much empathy for us," Ortiz said.

YDI leadership said in a statement that it's already met "on several occasions" with employees to explain why they are not eligible and have already met with Groginsky to discuss alternate funding streams.

"Youth Development, Inc. is committed to increasing staff salaries for early childcare educators and our support staff," the statement read. "The guiding principle we all agree on is that our wonderful staff deserve salary increases and we are committed to that end."

YDI did not share any specific plans about how they would increase wages for the hourly employees.

As for the \$3 they don't qualify for, New Mexico is funding those raises through a grant called Competitive Pay for Professionals, a \$77 million federal program funded by the American Rescue Plan Act.

According to the American Rescue Plan guidelines for child care funding, salary increases and other funding are not covered for public pre-kindergarten programs, Head Start and Early Head Start because

they "typically operate under different program rules and funding structures than child care."

Maddy Hayden, a spokesperson with the governor's said the administration would work at the federal level to fund programs that did not qualify under those orders. Hayden did not give any specific details about how they would move forward with those plans. "Unfortunately, we are limited by federal funding restrictions in what we can do to directly impact wages for educators working in federal education programs," she said.

When the governor made the announcement about the \$3 raises in a press release on Oct. 26, 2022, she assigned the early childhood education department to handle requests for raising staff wages.

According to the department's spokesperson Micah McCoy, leadership knew at the time there were federal restrictions that would've prevented people like the workers at YDI from getting the bump in pay.

For some Head Start employees, it's not just about the \$3 raises. It's about being fairly compensated for their work. Felicitas Torres-Mesa, a head cook at a YDI facility, said she's in charge of making several meals a day, filling out paperwork

and even picking up food sometimes.

She makes a little more than \$14.50 an hour. Cooking is her passion, she said, but her passion can't help her pay the bills.

"The real, real truth is we're being exploited," Torres-Mesa said in Spanish. "Who is going to come work here when they can go to McDonald's and make more and not have to do any paperwork?"

It wasn't always this way for her. When she first started 15 years ago, she lived comfortably. Now she has to ask for money to help with her rent, bills and medical care.

"If I had more money, I wouldn't go to sleep at night wondering how I'm going to make it the next day," Torres-Mesa said.

Many of her co-workers are afraid to speak out. She isn't anymore.

"I have people over 60 tell me, 'It's too late for me to start over,'" Torres-Mesa said. "They don't want to get fired. So I feel like I have to stand up for them. I have to speak up."

Low wages is one of the driving factors of the child care worker shortage in the U.S.

According to the Center for the Study of Child Care Employment at the University of California Berke-

ley, the average child care employee salary is \$22,290 – that's \$2,310 below the federal poverty line.

While federal lawmakers are trying to redirect money for professional development, those gains are lost as long as low pay drives qualified educators out of the field, the center said.

Vanessa Rogers, an early childhood educator at YDI, doesn't want to leave. She wants to make YDI "the best place ever to work." She believes the infants in her care have taught her more than she could ever teach them and she wants her profession to be valued for its contributions to society.

"We're not valued for the future we're rearing. We rear doctors, lawyers, scientists – they all had teachers," Rogers said. "We're not viewed as professionals anymore. That hurts my heart."

Rogers said that employees do get raises, but they are based on percentage. That means the lowest-paid employees get the smallest raises and turnover is high among early educators.

Recently, her 14-year-old granddaughter got a job in customer service and is now making more money than her.

Meanwhile, YDI is considering adding more classrooms, Rog-

ers said, but it is still struggling to fill the classrooms it has now with staff.

Torres-Mesa is not surprised by this.

"It's the same thing every year," Torres-Mesa said. "They say they're doing so well and have all this money that they have to spend, but we never see it."

Rogers encouraged her colleagues to "stand alongside" those leading the charge for higher pay even if they are too afraid to speak.

A group of educators and staff at YDI is rallying together to schedule a meeting with Groginsky because some say they feel left in the dark and need to take matters into their own hands.

"How do we even know you're working on these things if you aren't talking to us?" Rogers said of YDI. "I understand that change takes time, but you've got to be transparent."

*Megan Taros is a freelance reporter for Source New Mexico.*

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# ¡Mejor Juntos!



## El reciclaje semanal ya está en marcha a todos los clientes de desechos sólidos de Denver!

La recolección semanal de compost se implementará este verano. Denver está ampliando los servicios para reducir la cantidad de basura que va a los vertederos y proteger el medio ambiente. La Ciudad está facturando a los clientes directamente por los servicios de residuos en función del tamaño del bote de basura. Cuanto más pequeño sea el carrito de basura, menor será la tarifa. Regístrese ahora para crear y administrar su cuenta.



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la mañana, media jornada por la tarde, jornada completa, etcétera. Esos errores significaban que las familias podían haberse apuntado a ofertas de preescolar que no existían.

Aunque los errores afectaron a un subconjunto de los casi 28.000 solicitantes, el departamento está permitiendo que todas las familias que presentaron solicitudes hagan revisiones, porque algunas creyeron erróneamente que era un sistema por orden de llegada y se apresuraron a presentar sus solicitudes de preescolar el día que se abrió el sistema, el 17 de ene-

ro. Además, unos 150 proveedores de preescolar más se inscribieron para ofrecer preescolar a través del nuevo programa después de que la aplicación se abrió por primera vez, por lo que las aves tempranas pueden haber tenido menos opciones que las familias que presentaron más tarde.

El Estado ha prometido enviar a las familias que presenten sus solicitudes de preescolar antes del 24 de febrero un correo electrónico el 30 de marzo informándoles de a qué centro de preescolar corresponde su hijo y qué pasos deben dar para matricularse. Las

familias aún pueden solicitar la plaza de preescolar después del 24 de febrero, pero se les informará más adelante.

**Ann Schimke es reportera senior de Chalkbeat. Esta historia fue publicada originalmente por Chalkbeat.**

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

**Para Noticias de Colorado:**  
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## Resilience

"My mom and dad were immigrants to this country," Flores explained. "My mom was the glue that held us together. But a lot of her time was spent working, trying to support the family. In that time, Carlos was a constant."

Even after Flores graduated, Frésquez continued to champion Flores' work and recommend him for available opportunities — which is how Flores ultimately found himself back at MSU Denver as an affiliate professor.

### Inspiration for future artists

Now a full-time professor and Art faculty lead at Front Range Community College, Flores serves as a guide for the young, hopeful creatives of the next generation.

He tries to create the same sense of community and camaraderie for his students that he found at MSU Denver and encourages them to lean on one another to start building their network from the campus studio.

"The biggest thing I hope I've imparted on my students, whether it be spoken or nonverbal, is you need to have a passion for this," he said. "Art is not easy; it's not easy living. I try to talk to them very openly and honestly about my career and its trajectory."

Of course, there is also the lesson he teaches simply by being himself: the power of resilience.

"I'm very stubborn when it comes to my art practice, and that stems partly from being in a chair," he said. "I want to prove to everyone that my wheelchair is not a limitation; it's just a part of who I am."

"Even though my legs were taken from me, it's not inhibiting me creatively."

**Peyton García is a Contributing Writer for MSU RED. This story appears in the winter 2022 issue of RED Magazine.**

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## Sierra

cracks down on leaks. Air pollution knows no boundary, these rules are necessary to protect public health and the environment in New Mexico, as well as in bordering states, like Texas. It is the job of the EPA to create meaningful federal rules that set a minimum standard for new and existing oil and gas operations - it is the best tool we have to protect communities from harmful pollutants. After a huge outpouring of comments from all over the country, it is not critical that a final, strong rule be implemented as soon as possible to ensure that our communities' air gets cleaned up for healthier, fuller lives."

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## Resiliencia

sus estudiantes que encontró en MSU Denver y les anima a apoyarse unos en otros para empezar a construir su red desde el estudio del campus.

"Lo más importante que espero haber transmitido a mis alumnos, ya sea de forma verbal o no verbal, es que hay que tener pasión por esto", afirma. "El arte no es fácil; no es fácil vivir. Intento hablarles muy abierta y honestamente de mi carrera y su trayectoria".

Por supuesto, también está la lección que enseña simplemente siendo él mismo: el poder de la resiliencia.

"Soy muy testarudo en lo que respecta a mi práctica artística, y eso se deriva en parte de estar en

una silla", afirma. Quiero demostrar a todo el mundo que mi silla de ruedas no es una limitación, sino parte de lo que soy".

"Aunque me hayan quitado las piernas, eso no me inhibe creativamente".

**Peyton García es escritor colaborador de MSU RED. Esta historia aparece en el número de invierno de 2022 de la revista RED.**

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

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## Ranchers

that a white neighbor, Teresa Clark, has been terrorizing and harassing them due to their race, and that the local sheriff's office is discriminating against them in the dispute.

The Mallerys claim that multiple animals have been killed on their property and that they have faced intimidation from neighbors and members of the community over the past two years. They claim that the sheriff's office has been no help.

They were both arrested last week for felony stalking on Clark's property and were released on bond, according to Colorado Public Radio. Since then, organizations including the NAACP Colorado Montana Wyoming State-Area Conference and the Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Colorado Holiday Commission have lent their support to the Mallerys.

After the Mallerys' story went viral on social media, the El Paso Sheriff's Office denied allegations of racism and framed the case as a land dispute between two neighbors who liberally call the police and file reports against one another. Between August 2021 and September 2022, the office received 46 calls from Clark, 47 calls from Nicole Mallery and 11 from Courtney Mallery. They released over 100 pages of records related to the dispute.

The office characterized the story as "misinformation and mischaracterization" during a Feb. 14 press conference.

"They don't want it to look like what it really is — a modern day, Jim Crow, old boys network. A police department that doesn't want to investigate \$200,000 worth of

vandalism, animals being slaughtered and folks talking about lynching in the year 2023," Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Holiday Commission Chair Vern Howard said at the Friday rally.

Rallygoers expressed support for the Mallerys and advocated for the passage of legislation called the CAREN Act, which stands for Caution Against Racially Exploitative Non-Emergencies. It would create a civil penalty for people who call the police on people of color when there's "no reason to believe a crime or offense, or imminent threat to person or property, is occurring."

That bill has not been introduced in the Colorado General Assembly. New York adopted a similar law in 2020.

Democratic state Sen. Tony Exum, who represents Colorado Springs, said he called the sheriff when he heard about the Mallery case and said that a one-sided narrative has developed. He committed to tracking the case.

"We're going to change that. We're going to make sure the Mallerys are treated fairly," he said Friday. "They have a right to be there and to expect to be treated fairly by the sheriff's department."

Democratic Reps. Naquetta Ricks of Aurora and Regina English of Colorado Springs also appeared at the rally.

**Sara Wilson is a Reporter with Colorado Newslines. This article is republished from Colorado Newslines under a Creative Commons license.**

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# ESTAMOS AQUÍ PARA AYUDAR

¿HA SIDO IMPACTADO POR LOS INCENDIOS FORESTALES DE HERMITS PEAK O CALF CANYON?



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# SNAP SUPPORTS COLORADANS

## GET HEALTHY FOOD ON YOUR DINNER TABLE

### WHAT'S SNAP?

SNAP, federally known as the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program, exists to ensure families and individuals can purchase groceries. It supports working families, children and older adults to help weather life storms.

- **SNAP is like social security:** A portion of your tax dollars funded SNAP, and now it's here to help you!
- **SNAP supports the economy:** When you spend SNAP dollars you support local business owners and grocers. In 2018, SNAP contributed more than \$1 billion to Colorado's economy.
- **SNAP is guilt free:** SNAP exists to help you make ends meet during tough times. The program is large enough to help you, your family & your neighbors!

### HOW DOES IT WORK?

SNAP, previously known as food stamps, is run by the USDA and provides qualifying households with monthly funds to help purchase groceries. The amount received depends on household size, income, and expenses.

Every month, funds are loaded onto a Quest Electronic Benefit Transfer (or EBT) card. EBT cards are then used like a debit card\* at grocery stores, convenience stores and select farmers markets.

*\*EBT cards do not allow for cash withdrawals.*

### BENEFITS OF SNAP



Supports better health, overall well-being and happiness



Lowers health care costs and improves long-term health



Enhances work productivity



Keeps older adults stable and independent



Supports local farmers, ranchers, producers and business owners



Improves academic achievement



Increases the likelihood of completing high school

## SNAP FUELS HAPPIER, HEALTHIER LIVES!

Contact the Food Resource Hotline to speak with a food assistance navigator and get help finding food resources, like food pantries, in your area and assistance with your SNAP application. The hotline is free, bilingual and confidential. Call for immediate assistance (Monday – Friday, 8 am – 4:30 pm), no appointments necessary.

**HUNGER FREE COLORADO**  
**FOOD RESOURCE**  
**HOTLINE**  
 STATEWIDE, TOLL-FREE  
**855-855-4626**

**HUNGER**  
**FREE COLORADO**

[HungerFreeColorado.org](https://HungerFreeColorado.org)



/HungerFreeColorado



@HungerFreeCO

Hunger Free Colorado connects families and individuals to food resources and fuels change in policies, systems and social views, so no Coloradan goes hungry.

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JTOH presenta:

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Únete a Journey Through Our Heritage de Metro State University y a socios comunitarios para aprender cómo un proyecto de ley se convierte en ley, tu capacidad para afectar el cambio sistémico a través de la abogacía en el proceso legislativo, qué proyectos de ley ambientales se están proponiendo actualmente y cuál es tu poder para influir a los políticos. ¡Juntos podemos luchar por la justicia, nuestras familias y nuestro futuro! Talleres, recursos y comida gratuita, ¡además de la oportunidad de reunirte con tus legisladores estatales!

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