



# Colonias Development Council

## Annual Report

### 2001-2002

1050 Monte Vista, Las Cruces NM 88001

#### Letter from the Director

Estimados Amigos,

In 1994, the Colonias Development Council (CDC) became incorporated as an independent 501(c)3 organization. The CDC began life in the late 1980s as the Farmworker Organizing Project, a program of the Catholic Diocese of Las Cruces Office of Social Ministry (OCSM). CDC started as a community organizing entity focused on the problems of southern New Mexico's farmworkers. The organization expected to deal primarily with traditional farmworker concerns, including labor conditions and wages. Yet in our early one-on-one interviews with area community members, people repeatedly stressed that the issues that most concerned them were colonias—the communities they lived in, which lacked basic infrastructure; decent, safe, sanitary housing; and improved roads.

Back in the early 1990s, colonias were just entering the public consciousness. Only people living on the border had even heard the word. Here in southern New Mexico, the colonia phenomenon really exploded after the 1986 Immigration Reform and Control Act (IRCA). Farmworkers and others who had the opportunity to legalize their status in the U.S. faced an acute shortage of affordable housing. Property developers sold many of these people unimproved and in many cases illegal parcels of land outside city boundaries. People bought land and built homes or moved in whatever they could afford—often older singlewide trailers. In some colonias, people had to dig their own wells and fight to gain access to electricity. Working wastewater systems were a rarity—and there are still many colonias in the area that do not have them.

In the intervening decade, colonias have become a popular topic of conversation, and not only

along the border. The Department of Housing and Urban Development in Washington, D.C recently announced a Colonia Gateways Initiative. Colonias even get mentioned in popular magazines like *Time* and *Newsweek*. Yet although talking about colonias has become more prevalent—and even fashionable.—real change has been slower in coming. Although colonia residents have made great strides in improving the quality of life in their communities, they still struggle with inadequate or non-existent infrastructure, poor quality housing, and dirt roads. They also still struggle to gain affordable health and child care and access to educational and job opportunities. Now in this post September 11 period, they must also grapple with the increasing militarization of the border and the targeting of their communities by Border Patrol and other law enforcement agencies.

This year, as in the past, CDC has focused on leadership development and community organizing. Yet now as never before the colonia residents we work with feel an urgent need to get organized. In this tightening economic climate, colonia residents are often the first to suffer job losses, the removal of basic human and civil rights protections, and the disregard for the environment that all too often accompanies times of economic downturn. However, as I reflect on the events of the past year, I see great cause for hope. Residents of southern New Mexico's colonias have banded together more effectively than ever to answer the challenges facing their communities. This does not mean that they have succeeded in obtaining everything they need, but if the history of this area teaches us anything it is that bringing about change is hard and must be fought for. In this letter, I would like to share with you some of the recent successes CDC and its member colonia communities have achieved and detail the challenges ahead.

The achievements of CDC and its member colonia groups in 2001-2002 include the following:

- ◆ Providing training to over 220 colonia residents in leadership and organizational development, including board development, conflict management, media, and fundraising. CDC also provided trainings on financial planning and business development to women involved in CDC economic development initiatives; "Know Your Rights" training to CDC youth organizations and other groups, which included training on how to report and document alleged abuses and violations against immigrants by Border Patrol and other law enforcement. Over the year, CDC provided over 23 such trainings and/or training series
- ◆ Giving organizing support to residents of Chaparral during 2001 to help them mobilize against a planned landfill (the fourth such landfill in the immediate vicinity of the community). Over 500 residents showed up at public hearings to testify against the landfill. Over 600 wrote letters of protest to their elected representatives. In January 2002, New Mexico Environment Department (NMED) approved the landfill application. In February, the CDC appealed this decision based on the failure of the State's landfill application process to consider social impact questions or give community input any real weight in the decision-making process.
- ◆ Helping to convene a coalition of southern New Mexico non-profit organizations to develop a regional environmental justice agenda to address pressing environmental concerns. The partners' first joint action will be to join in a statewide Wastewatch Project being coordinated by Southwest Research and Information Center out of Albuquerque.
- ◆ Working with the El Paso-based *Red Fronteriza Por Los Derechos Humanos* (formerly the Immigration Law Enforcement Monitoring Program {ILEMP} out of Houston, TX), to sustain and expand an ongoing documentation campaign of alleged civil rights abuses and violations by Border Patrol and other law enforcement agencies.
- ◆ Developing in partnership with Tierra Del Sol Housing Corporation, Inc., and Anthony Water and Sanitation District a program to bring natural gas services to three colonia communities (Las Palmeras, Montana Vista, and Mesquite) in southern Doña Ana County. Residents wanted natural gas because the high cost of propane meant they couldn't afford to heat their homes. We expect the communities of Las Palmeras and Montana Vista to be fully hooked up to safe, affordable, natural gas services by early 2003
- ◆ Providing organizing support to Tierra Del Sol Housing Corporation, Inc in a HUD-funded housing construction and rehabilitation initiative that will eventually spread to five area colonias. The first two houses built under the initiative were completed in Las Palmeras in January 2002. Six residents in Milagro have also completed applications to build houses under the program and three new houses are currently being constructed.
- ◆ In partnership with Border Waterworks, continuing to help residents in three colonias plan, design, and construct self-help wastewater systems and connect them to existing treatment facilities, a project that will ultimately bring working wastewater systems to over 300 households.
- ◆ Bringing together groups of colonia women through the Child Care/Economic Development Initiative (CC/EDI) to develop quality child care centers. In June 2002, *Mujeres en Progreso*, a group who has worked together for over five years, opened the first licensed child care center in Columbus, New Mexico. The Columbus Child Development Center currently employs six local women and provides quality care to 18 low-income, disadvantaged colonia children. A group of women in Chaparral, *Luz en el Desierto*, has completed a market survey, a comprehensive business plan, and, with assistance from CDC staff, applied for funding to construct and open their child care center, which they hope to open in the fall of 2003.
- ◆ Helping bring together and supporting three new craft groups in Chaparral: *Familias Unidas de Chaparral-Camino al Éxito*, *Las Hormigas de Chaparral* and *Mujeres Aprendiendo a Coser*. The women in *Familias Unidas de Chaparral* recently completed a 14-week life-skills and professional sewing skills class offered through the Community Action Agency of southern New Mexico. The other two groups are holding more informal meetings where members teach each other new sewing and craft skills. All three groups are interested in using their sewing and craft skills to form individual and cooperative businesses to improve the economic situation of themselves and their families.
- ◆ Through the Youth Organizing Project, supporting a new youth group in Las Palmeras composed of approximately 17 middle and high school students who came together around the issue of developing a park for their community.

- ◆ Giving members of CDC's Youth Organizing Project (YOP) "Migra watch" training on how to form community patrols to monitor Border Patrol actions. This has resulted in members of CDC youth organizations initiating regular "cop watches" in Hatch and Las Cruces
- ◆ Embarking on our 5<sup>th</sup> year working with the Hatch-based youth group the Recreational Organizing Council (ROC). In July 2002, four ROC members were selected to represent New Mexico at the Youth Land Summit 2002 held at Pauite Nation Reservation, Pyramid Lake Nevada.
- ◆ Partnering with ENLACE (Engaging Latino Communities for Education), a Kellogg Foundation initiative at New Mexico State University to reduce the drop-out rate and increase the academic success of Latino youth at both high school and college levels. CDC helped ENLACE coordinate a men's conference, aimed at getting male members of local colonias involved in these issues, in July 2002, with over 30 community members in attendance.

In past years, the CDC's annual report has covered these achievements community by community, with an additional section covering our work in economic development and immigration. This year, however, we've decided to try something different. Rather than try to elaborate on the totality of the CDC's achievements, we've asked each organizer to provide a highlight or "snapshot" of the past year. This highlight might be an event, an organizing process, or a leader. We hope this will help paint a more complete picture of CDC's ongoing project.

### **Rubén Nuñez:**

*(Rubén Nuñez has worked as lead organizer of the CDC for over 13 years. When he began to work with the CDC, he was a farmworker in Hatch. Concerned about the welfare of children working alongside him in the onion fields, he became active in the Farmworker Organizing Project. From there, he became an organizer and two years ago, he became the Lead Organizer of the CDC.)*

This year was a busy one, with organizing in communities and around issues of concern to colonia residents, especially immigration and civil rights and environmental issues. However, one event that made me especially proud as an organizer was when this summer four youth from the Hatch area who are members of the Recreational

Organizing Council (ROC) were invited to attend the Youth Land Summit 2002 at Pauite Nation Reservation in Pyramid Lake Nevada. The youth from our community were chosen to represent New Mexico at the summit in which forty-five young people from rural African American, Latino, and Native American communities met to discuss their ideas on land use, environmental justice and other related issues. The young people came back full of ideas and passion about what they had seen and heard. They also met and made friends with young people from many other rural communities. This made me especially glad and proud because I felt that the organizing tradition and the ideas we work for at the CDC were being passed on to the next generation.



### **Mary Ann Benavidez:**

*(Like Rubén, Mary Ann started out as a community leader in Rincón concerned, in particular, with environmental issues. As a mother of five, Mary Ann is also concerned with issues of community development, educational and job opportunities in the area. A people person, Mary Ann has been invaluable in building bridges and partnerships that work for the good of the colonia constituency.)*

A highlight for me since I started for the CDC again—after taking a break when I moved with my family to Presidio, Texas—has been CDC's collaboration with Tierra Del Sol Housing Corporation, Inc. on a project funded by HUD that plans to build up to 15 new homes in colonias and renovate up to 80 homes to meet County housing standards. The project moved to Milagro five months ago. Flosa Sanchez was running it then, but the project had just taken off in Milagro when he was killed. His tragic loss slowed things down for a while, but then Rosie Torres took over, and we worked together to

explain the process to the families in El Milagro who might be eligible. It was a lot of work. People were worried about borrowing money—even with low-interest loans. What could they lose? What if they couldn't make payments? In the end, the critical step to getting people involved was providing financial education and teaching people what the forms were asking and how to answer the necessary questions. These are skills people need anyway, and I was glad when people learned the process and felt confident enough to apply. Six families applied and three families are now getting new houses built under the program. That makes me feel good because Rincón needs better housing. People also need to see what is possible and how you go about making changes to your life.

### **Ray Padilla:**

*(Ray joined the CDC in 1995 after serving as a Peace Corps volunteer in Belize where he worked with young people. He was the CDC's first youth organizer and built the Youth Organizing project, whose primary tenant is that youth should set their own agenda and build and create and own their own organizations. In his time with CDC, Ray became a member of the board of directors of YouthAction and of the New Mexico Community Development Loan Fund. This year, he left CDC to finish his MA in education and graduated in December 2002. We will miss Ray but are sure he will succeed wherever he goes.)*

For me, there were many highlights in my last year at the CDC. But the highlight I want to focus on here is an event that I have wanted to make happen ever since I first joined the CDC. This was the *Migra* watch training for members of the Youth Organizing Project (YOP) that CDC facilitated in March 2002. I have been interested in holding *Migra* watches ever since members of the Recreational Organizing Council (ROC) visited Tucson to look at the work of the youth group Brigada Juvenil and saw the *Migra* and cop watches Brigada Juvenil were holding in Tucson. That's why this year when some ROC members said they wanted to learn to do a *Migra* watch, I called Roberto Martínez, who hosted our Tucson visit. Roberto is now working with *Casa*

*de Colores*, an organization that promotes Mexican culture in Brownsville, Texas. When I explained what was up, Roberto agreed to come facilitate the training. The training started with 17 participants drawn from the ROC and the new Las Palmeras youth group. Roberto opened the session with a history lesson. He covered the history of the development of the border, as we know it, including the creation and growth of the Border Patrol. He then moved on to define what human and civil rights mean. He ended the morning by covering what the United Nations' Charter of Human Rights lists as the basic rights of any human being. The youth were especially interested in the UN Charter of Human Rights and at how many rights a person has according to the UN (some of which they do not have as U.S. citizens).

During the afternoon session, Robert gave a "how-to" lesson on performing a *Migra* watch. The youth did role plays and explored various possible scenarios to prepare them to carry out their own *Migra* watch. Roberto also went over a checklist of required equipment for a *Migra* watch, and rules that must be followed to keep a *Migra* watch legal. Last, he covered what to do if any alleged abuses and or violations of rights are witnessed during a *Migra* watch (as occurred during *Migra* watches held by Brigada Juvenil in Tucson). As the session wore on, the youth began to open up about their own experiences and feelings of stress to do with the presence of *La Migra* in their communities. The day ended with plans for carrying out a *Migra* watch of their own the next day.

The second day, the youth performed a practice *Migra* watch in the Hatch area. Following this practice watch, the youth decided to start holding *Migra* and cop watches in Las Cruces on monthly basis. They also decided they would use the *Migra* and cop watches to disseminate "Know Your Rights" information to youth and other area residents. One of my proudest moments as a youth organizer has been witnessing how the youth from the ROC and from Las Palmeras have come together to make *Migra* and cop watches regular events in the area. Through these watches,

the youth have continued to learn civil rights and the border. They have also widely circulated “Know Your Rights” information. Their work has helped make other youth and adults in their communities more aware of what their rights are, which is important now after September 11 when protecting our rights as citizens and residents of the U.S. is more challenging and vital than ever.

### **Luz Mora:**

*(Luz Mora is a long-time resident of Chaparral who became involved in Luz en el Desierto Guarderia Comunitaria de Chaparral. Through this experience, she became involved in organizing. In August 2002, she was hired as a part-time organizer with the CDC)*

In the community of Chaparral we don't have a child care center with staff trained in child development. Seeing the great need of working families who don't have a safe, trustworthy place to leave their children, in 2001 we initiated a project to open a child care center. We are a group of four women working with technical assistance from the Colonias Development Council, who didn't have any resources to start with. A very important day for us was April 16<sup>th</sup> when Mr. Colquitt was kind enough to donate land for this project. This donation gave us a lot of pleasure and the strength to keep going with the project. When we are able to realize our goals the child care center will be a source of great support for Chaparral. More people will be able to work or to school knowing their children are well cared for.

### **Irma Castañeda:**

*(Irma Castañeda is a proud member of Luz en el Desierto. She is also deeply involved with the Chaparral craft groups that were formed over the past year. In August 2002, she joined the CDC in the position of part-time community organizer)*

One of the satisfactions that I have had in the time that I have known of CDC is seeing how happy the women feel in being involved in something, particularly in the sewing groups. I would like to comment on one of these women, one whom I have had the privilege of knowing for a long time. In the past, she didn't like to

leave her home and always told me that she didn't really like to get involved in activities. I feel very proud of her now because she has become very motivated, and she feels like a valued member of a sewing group. I would like to thank CDC for becoming interested in our community.

I also feel very fortunate to have become part of the team of people that work for CDC. Even though I am a person without formal education, they have given me the opportunity to learn something that I could never have imagined doing. I am very happy to have been chosen. Now I feel the way I felt when I was a child going to school because it is like a dream to be learning new things. I have in me this desire, and I am sure that the work that CDC does is very valuable because it made conscious that I could be someone in my life, not only for my family but also for my community. Thanks to CDC for believing in me.



### **Michael Cordova:**

*(Michael Cordova was hired in October 2002 as the CDC's new youth organizer, replacing Ray Padilla (see above). He brings to the position a wealth of experience as a youth counselor and mentor with Families and Youth Inc. and Southwest Counseling in Las Cruces and with other organizations in Colorado, his home state.)*

Working with youth in an organizing capacity is a dream for me. I have always looked for positions where I can work as a counselor or mentor to young people, and the CDC is a real opportunity for me to do this and express my values. I still believe youth represent our best hope for the future and have the energy and vision to bring about change in our world. I am

eager to hook up with the ROC and the youth of Las Palmeras and see what they can accomplish with CDC's support.

### **Megan Snedden:**

*(Megan Snedden has been the CDC's Economic Development Coordinator for three years. Her background is in anthropology. Megan's tireless work ethic has been key to the success of the Child Care/Economic Development Initiative and the emergence of craft circles in Chaparral in which women are exploring using their craft skills to develop small business ideas.)*

This year there were several highlights in my work as Economic Development Coordinator. First, was the rapid progress, Luz en el Desierto, the child care group in Chaparral made toward realizing their vision of opening a quality child care center in Chaparral. Second, was the emergence of craft circles in Chaparral, which are committed to exploring developing a regional craft catalog with a social justice focus. The idea behind the Catalog Project (as we are calling it) is to work with other women's collaboratives doing crafts in southern New Mexico and in Chihuahua and Chiapas, Mexico to develop a catalog that will give all the groups a common forum through which to market their work. We feel this project—while ambitious—has great potential to open up new economic opportunity in geographically isolated colonia communities and to help colonia women by creating ties of solidarity between local groups and other groups of women regionally and beyond working toward similar goals. The third highlight for me was the opening of the Columbus Child Development Center in Columbus, New Mexico in June 2002. The opening of the center was the culmination of five years of work by *Mujeres en Progreso* and the realization of a dream these women had of bringing quality child care to Columbus. For this reason, I wanted them to describe the events themselves in this space. What follows is what the women of *Mujeres en Progreso* jointly wrote about the Columbus Child Development Center for the CDC Annual Report.



### ***Mujeres en Progreso.***

In January, we hired a Director to manage our child care center, the Columbus Child Development Center, and after that we began to work in the Catholic Parish Hall. We worked very hard to be able to come to the new building. We were very happy when the building was brought to Columbus (it is a modular building). After it arrived, we worked a lot to be able to start, and we had to wait to become licensed so that we could start working with children. We had to clean and purchase the necessary furniture and toys. Afterwards we had the Inauguration, which made us very happy because many people attended. The Bishop also came to bless our center. We then had to work to put concrete and fencing. When we were told we could move to the new building, we moved that very same day. Now we are attending a lot of good trainings. When we started only three people were able to work, and now we are happy to have six employees. Also, we started with four children and now we have 18, which is good because we can see that we have made a lot of progress.

### **Elva Villegas**

*(This year Elva Villegas was hired to be CDC's Office Manager, replacing Amy Armendariz who was with the CDC for over four years. Elva grew up in Deming and has returned after several years in Arizona. Already, Elva has impressed everyone with her curiosity, hard work, and willingness to do what it takes to get the job done)*

The highlight for me about working at the CDC has been being given the opportunity to learn about so many new things. For example, before I started working here, I did not realize

that the issues the CDC works on were so important in my own community. They seemed more distant from me, things I read about in the newspaper. Now, I am learning new facts about immigration, environmental justice, and poverty in this area every day. This has been the biggest eye-opener for me and makes me really excited about the work I do at the CDC.

## **Sheila Black**

*(Sheila Black has worked as CDC's Development Director for the past year and a half. She has a background in English literature and creative writing and has had the opportunity to exercise her writing skills in describing CDC's work for funders and the public.)*

Like many non-profits, funding remains a major challenge for the CDC. With CDC's scope of work and staffing demands increasing over the past year, we have, by necessity, looked hard at developing new funding streams. The majority of CDC's funding comes from private charitable foundations, many of which have long-term relationships with CDC. These funders (to whom we are immensely grateful) are listed on the back page of this annual report. Over the past three years, CDC has diversified by seeking out funding from a broader range of private foundations. CDC has also increased our funding from local donors and outreach fundraising from 12 to 15% of our budget. We have also begun providing training to other non-profits as a small source of funding. We hope to continue increasing these funding streams over the next few years. A highlight for me this year was the work CDC staff did, with help from community member groups, to develop a calendar to serve as a fundraising tool. The 2003 CDC calendar, with pictures by award-winning photographer Karen Bucher, is titled "*Hecho a Mano: Building Community and Culture in the Colonias of Southern New Mexico.*" It features photographs of colonia artists and craftspeople and colonia residents working together on community projects. We are selling the calendar through numerous local bookstores and gift shops. We have also found it has been a great way to let people outside the area gain a better sense of colonia residents and communi-

ties. We launched the calendar with a dessert buffet and dance at the Court Youth Center in September 2002. Over 50 people attended. We also held a marathon reading featuring novelist Kevin McIlvoy and poet Connie Voisine in October 2002 to raise money for the Chaparral Landfill Appeal. Current events being planned include a big band concert and a bowling bash. Through these and similar activities, we hope to continue to raise our local fundraising profile.



### *(Director's Letter Continued):*

As you can see from the staff highlights, the CDC has a busy and successful year. One big event this year that we have not yet mentioned is that in November 2002, CDC took the major step of purchasing a building at 1050 Monte Vista in Las Cruces to serve as a permanent home for our organization—a home which we will share with the Family Unity Office of the Catholic Diocese of Las Cruces. Our new building is much nicer and not much more expensive than the office space we have rented over the past several years. Having a building will allow us to build vital equity and increase our stability. With the purchase of a building to serve as our home, we enter the new fiscal year with even more confidence that CDC is going to be around for the long haul.

The two biggest challenges faced by the CDC in 2001-2002 have been 1) keeping up with the demands of the communities where we organize, and 2) obtaining the funding to work as broadly as we would like. Colonias communities in southern New Mexico have numerous needs and concerns. Many of these are concrete, such as the need for better infrastructure and housing. Others are less tangible, though equally pressing, such as the need for expanded educational and economic opportunities. CDC's work thus covers a broad spectrum of

issues. Last year, for example, CDC undertook significant efforts in organizing residents around infrastructure issues, (successfully developing a plan which we hope will result in residents of three communities obtaining natural gas services), environmental justice (supporting Chaparral in its efforts to oppose a landfill), and civil rights (putting on train-the-trainer "Know Your Rights" trainings to answer community demand and helping CDC youth organizations establish regular area "Migra and cop watches."). We also worked on substantial initiatives in housing and child care.

CDC is committed to keeping up with this expanding workload while keeping our organizing focus consistent and the organization solvent. Staff worked to address these challenges this year by 1) engaging in extensive strategic planning on how to be most effective in our organizing as well as in our work in economic and community development, 2) working to expand our capacity to work with local communities and organizations, and 3) attempting to address funding issues by diversifying our funding sources. Our strategic planning process led us to recognize that while the community development projects we are involved in are essential and provide key organizing opportunities, CDC staff members often have a hard time juggling their duties as organizers and the tasks required to effectively manage such projects. We are, therefore, looking at how to best develop a community development component that is both efficient and supports our work in organizing and leadership development. Another challenge CDC worked to address this year was expanding our networking and coalition-building locally, statewide, and regionally to address key policy issues of concern to colonia residents.

In immigration, CDC continued its collaboration with the El Paso-based *Red Fronteriza Por Los Derechos Humanos* (formerly the Immigration Law Enforcement Program (ILEMP) out of Houston, Texas). In June 2002, *Red Fronteriza* collaborated with CDC to put on a two-part "Know Your Rights" training given in Del Cerro. Also, in August 2002, CDC staff attended a three day train-the-trainer "Know Your Rights" workshop in Anthony, New Mexico. The training was developed by *Red Fronteriza* with the aim of creating human rights

outreach workers or *promotoras* to disseminate civil rights information to area communities. CDC also continued to cooperate with *Red Fronteriza* in its campaign to document alleged civil rights abuses and violations by Border Patrol and other law enforcement. The campaign covers Arizona, Texas, New Mexico, and Chihuahua, Mexico.

In environmental justice, CDC built on the experiences of the Chaparral Landfill Issue to expand and develop our work for environmental justice in the colonias. Specifically, we are actively pursuing our legal appeal of the Chaparral Landfill Decision. We have also committed to 1) developing and putting on a training series on environmental policy, in collaboration with other local organizations, to help area colonia residents assess environmental hazards in their communities and take action to address them in state and local environmental policies, 2) continuing to build the coalition of non-profit area agencies concerned with environmental justice issues which we helped convene last year, and 3) facilitating colonia participation in the Wastewatch Project described above. As the Chaparral example illustrates, colonia communities have often been disproportionately impacted by this waste storage problem. We aim to change that. For this reason, CDC has committed to helping the Wastewatch partners develop a statewide community organizing strategy.

The work described above in immigration and environmental justice has led the CDC to decide to focus on strategic planning around policy advocacy over the next year. Other areas in which we wish to expand our policy advocacy capacity are child care and family policy issues.

CDC's experiences this year reinforced our conviction that organizing and leadership development form a key part of creating successful community and economic development projects in the colonias. Our work with the CC/EDI child care groups is a good example of this. *Mujeres en Progreso*, the Columbus child care group, has been together for five years and has had many ups and downs. But the long-term personal support and training the women received paid off this year when they took the step of opening the first licensed child care center in Columbus, thereby benefiting not only

themselves but also the entire community. The group will continue to need support to become entirely self-sufficient, but the women have already developed substantial skills in working toward opening their center. They have grown as leaders and organizers and these skills are what have allowed them to absorb setbacks and keep working toward their goals. As this example suggests, CDC continues to find that leadership development and community organizing are our most effective strategies in furthering our mission of improving the quality of life for residents of southern New Mexico's colonias.

When CDC began working in the colonias of southern New Mexico in the late 1980s, public perception of these communities was overwhelmingly negative. They were seen primarily as sites of environmental hazards, "illegal" immigrants, drug trafficking, disease, and crime. Over the years, we have managed to change this dialogue by publicizing the facts about the colonias and by helping colonia residents speak out for themselves and become voices to be reckoned with. We have worked hard to make our council a presence in local and statewide debate about colonia issues. For example, the CDC calendar, *Hecho a Mano*, was envisioned not only as a funding source, but, more importantly, as a way of showing the true face of the colonias—communities full of vibrant, resourceful, resilient, and creative people. Changing public perceptions and drawing the attention of the general population to the problems and challenges facing colonia residents remains a big part of CDC's work.

In closing, this year CDC has succeeded in meeting many specific goals and in setting out a plan of action for the future. However, we have not done it alone. Perhaps because the needs in colonia are so great, non-profits in southern New Mexico have a history of working well together. For example, in developing the child care groups we have relied heavily on other local organizations and agencies, including La Vida Institute (an area child-care training provider), Success by Six, the Doña Ana County Maternal Child Health Council, and many others. Also, to make the gas project happen, we depended on long-term partnerships with Tierra Del Sol Housing Corporation, Inc., and Anthony Water and

Sanitation District. This is equally true of efforts to build infrastructure in the North of the County in which we have worked closely for many years with Border Waterworks, Tierra Del Sol Housing Corporation, Inc, and other area agencies. In environmental justice our work has been supported by Southern Area Health Education Center, the Border Health Office, the Border Environmental Health Council, Chaparral Community Health Council, and Southern New Mexico Legal Services as well as with Southwest Research and Information Center. CDC recognizes that our success in creating and maintaining such partnerships has greatly expanded our capacity to bring needed resources, services, and opportunities to area colonias. Yet our proudest success remains our ability to help mobilize the human resources in the communities where we work. Residents continue to amaze us by contributing their time and energy generously to our organization and to working effectively with CDC's many partners. Without this community participation, we could not exist. Over ten years ago, CDC began with the idea that communities know what they need, and given the tools, community members can act to make needed change happen. I am proud to say that this is still the heart of CDC's project. We thank you for your support.



Diana A. Bustamante



## **CDC Mission Statement**

This mission of the Colonias Development Council is to improve the quality of life in the colonias of southern New Mexico.

## **The Three Basic Assumptions**

The Colonias Development Council has a vision where colonia communities become happy, healthy communities of residents empowered to pursue their dreams and work together for the common good. In working to fulfill this vision, CDC operates under three basic assumptions.

These are that:

- People are acutely aware of their needs and resources
- Given the opportunity, people can take positive actions to change conditions in their lives
- By building communities through mutual support, people can become empowered to overcome obstacles in their lives that may previously have seemed insurmountable.

## **How You Can Help**

The Colonias Development Council needs and welcomes your support. You can become a supporting donor of the CDC by contributing as little as \$25.00 a year. Just fill out and return the form on the next page with your check or money order. If you need more information, please call the CDC at 505-647-2744 to set up a meeting. Contributing members receive copies of the CDC Annual Report and other newsletters. Help us make a difference in southern New Mexico. All contributions are fully tax deductible.

## **Financial Support**

CDC has been lucky to receive generous support from many organizations. In closing, we wish to extend a warm thanks to the following organizations, individuals, and private foundations for their help in making CDC's work possible:

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**Colonias Development Council  
1050 Monte Vista  
Las Cruces, NM 88001**

# Colonias Development Council Board of Directors

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Mesquite  
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Rincón  
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at-large member  
at-large member

## 2001-2002 Actual Budget

<b>Income</b>	
Contracted Services	\$ 21,334.08
Contribution Income	\$ 47,950.19
Rent	\$ 6,300.00
Grants/Donations	\$298,801.70
Other	\$ 312.00
Reimbursed Expenses	\$ 1,025.59
<b>TOTAL INCOME</b>	<b>\$375,723.56</b>

<b>Expenses</b>	
Contingency Fund	\$ 962.26
Continuing Education	\$ 2,233.70
Contract Labor	\$ 16,014.73
Equipment	\$ 3,330.74
Hospitality	\$ 1,523.59
Insurance	\$ 36,145.46
Interest Expense	\$ 1,467.27
Miscellaneous	\$ 873.49
Office Expenses	\$ 21,907.27
Professional Fees	\$ 5,257.45
Salaries	\$207,903.70
Stipend	\$ 3,871.00
Supplies	\$ 12,134.49
Taxes	\$ 18,530.79
Transportation	\$ 23,936.76
<b>TOTAL EXPENSES</b>	<b>\$356,092.70</b>

Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

**Return to: Colonias Development Council  
1050 Monte Vista  
Las Cruces, NM 88001  
(505)647-2744**

\_\_\_\_\_**YES! I want to support the work of the CDC. I am enclosing the following amount:**  
(please circle) \$25 \$50 \$100 \$500 \$1,000 Other: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_**I am interested in the work of the CDC but would like more information. Please contact me to set up a meeting.**