



Annual Report

Report Date

June 2006



Our logo!

CDC has had a busy and exciting year. We are thankful for your interest in the Colonias Development Council (CDC). We hope you enjoy this report of our activities over the past year. You can also keep up with CDC by accessing our website at www.colonias.org.

Drawings in this report are by Rini Templeton.

Areas of Work:

Community Development	2
Economic Development	3
Youth Organizing	4
Immigration and Civil Rights	4
Environmental Justice	5
Board and Budget	6
Funders/ Contributors	7
Building Capacity	7

Colonias Development Council

1050 Monte Vista, Las Cruces, NM 88001

Phone: (505) 647-2744 Fax: (505) 647-1462

www.colonias.org

Our Approach

CDC's mission is to improve the quality of life for southern New Mexico's colonia residents. Colonias are communities along the U.S.-Mexico border that lack basic infrastructure, decent housing and/or improved roads. Many colonia residents live below the poverty line and many are seasonal agricultural workers. CDC began in the late 1980s with the vision that by working together colonia residents could

build safe, healthy, vibrant communities where all residents have equal access to resources and opportunities. CDC works from three assumptions. First, that people are acutely aware of their needs and resources. Second, that given the opportunity, people can take action to change conditions in their lives. Third, by working together people are empowered to overcome obstacles that may

previously have seemed insurmountable. By working hand in hand with colonia residents over the past year, CDC continues to make progress toward making our vision for the colonias a reality.



Community Organizing and Leadership Development

Building strong committed grassroots organizations is the foundation of CDC's work. CDC's achievements in areas from community development to environmental justice depend on our work to build active vibrant grassroots community organizations. This year, CDC worked with groups in Salem, Milagro, Rincón, Rodey, Las Palmeras, Montana Vista, Chaparral, and Columbus. We also continued to work with the Sunland Park group

established last year. This year, the Chaparral group, Vecinos Unidos, became a major force in their community. A core group of 25-30 leaders held monthly meetings and organized community events. For example, they held a Fiesta on September 15, 2003, which over 100 people, including local legislators and County and State Officials, met and learned about ongoing issues facing Chaparral. Vecinos Unidos also met repeatedly with the

Board of County Commissioners from both Dona Ana and Otero Counties about Chaparral's needs, successfully advocating for improved trash collection and more medical services among other issues. In Sunland Park, CDC hired Olga Argüelles to work with a community group on environmental and youth issues. In Anthony, CDC organizer, Veronica Carmona began to work



Community Organizing and Leadership Development

“By building the Congreso and working with Alianza, we are seeking to create a regional force that can be a voice and consistent advocate for colonia residents in this part of the Border.”

Diana Bustamante,
Executive Director



“In Chaparral Vecinos Unidos has done a wonderful job of being there on many, many issues. It’s not just gas or the landfill, it’s the way the group has become a presence on every issue that arises in that community. Now they are beginning to link up with other groups. That’s when we know we are getting people organized.”

Veronica Carmona
Community Organizer

with a group of women concerned about the family, faith, and social justice. Five trainings were provided to the group on these issues. Veronica Carmona is now working to link this group with other member grassroots group in the area to form a single united organization. In the North, groups continued to work on infrastructure and environmental issues. As part of the Report Card for Success Project (see below),

a group of Hatch area parents came together to advocate on school issues. At the October 2006 Hatch School Board Meeting, the group successfully advocated for Spanish language translation services at future school board meetings. Also, this year, CDC solidified work with Alianza, a colonia organization from West Texas. In April, 2005, the two organizations put on a Border Fair Housing Conference. Out of this

Conference emerged the Congreso Regional de Las Colonias made up of 30 representatives from West Texas and southern New Mexico. The Congreso worked to develop a Declaration outlining needs and policy goals for area colonias. On October 8 2005, the Congreso held its first action—a march in Sunland Park, protesting border militarization and economic and social conditions. Over 200 people attended.

Community Development and Education

This year, CDC continued to support the efforts of colonia residents to gain access to safe affordable natural gas services. In Chaparral, CDC worked through Vecinos Unidos to organize over 100 blocks and negotiate with PNM gas to bring their services into the community. Community development and infrastructure issues were also important in the North where groups in Salem, Milagro, Rodey and Rincon continued to advocate for improved waste water systems (Milagro) and roads (Rodey and Rincon). In Rincon, 20 families worked to develop a community garden project, which will provide a new healthy food source to residents. CDC also finished its work to support the County project to hook 12 colonias up to working wastewater systems, with over 3,000 households having signed onto the

project. This year, CDC also significantly expanded its provision of community education on energy efficiency and financial literacy. In 2005-2006, CDC staff held 3 financial literacy and energy efficiency training series. The training module used was supported through a partnership with the University of Texas at El Paso and proved very popular with residents, combining hands-on financial information with a curriculum that showed residents how to save money by saving energy. This year, CDC also worked once again with Community Action Agency of Southern New Mexico to provide tax preparation services and counseling to area colonia residents. CDC staff members Elva Varela and Ericka Contreras provided tax services to 73 families and gained \$51,296 in Earned Income Tax Credit

(EITC) refunds. Over 70% of those who received services were not aware they were eligible for EITC monies. A goal of CDC’s financial literacy and tax service programs is to help colonia residents build equity and/or pursue strategies that help them gain greater financial security. This year the Border Fair Housing & Economic Justice Center (BFHEJ) of El Paso will also be moving in to CDC’s offices to provide on-site fair housing documentation and education. CDC is working with BFHEJ to develop a plan to provide information to area colonia residents on converting punitive land use contracts to more equitable warranties and/or mortgages—a vital issue in the colonias where many residents are paying higher than average interest rates for their land and homes.



Economic Development Efforts

Since 2000, developing community-based child care centers has been a major focus of CDC's economic development efforts. In 2002, CDC helped Mujeres en Progreso, a group of five women from Columbus, New Mexico, open the first licensed child care center in that community. In 2004, CDC won a \$400,000 grant to build a similar center in Chaparral, New Mexico. However, in addition to these child care programs, over the past year CDC has radically expanded its economic development efforts. Among other projects, CDC is developing a compressed earth block-

making business and a small vendor market in Anthony, New Mexico. CDC is also beginning to look at strategies for becoming a community development corporation that could potentially offer colonia residents such services as a credit union, low cost house and life insurance and access to other similar equity-building resources.. What follows is a brief report of CDC's major work on its ongoing projects over the past fiscal year.

Columbus: This year, the Columbus Center hired a new Director, Margarita Luján. Margarita has been working hard with the

women to improve programs and bring the Center to the next level of Aim High New Mexico, a statewide program that mentors child care centers into high quality accredited facilities. The Aim High Coordinator says the Center has been making excellent progress. The women also attended 14 trainings this year designed to build program quality. This year the Center also hosted Border Binational Health Week for the second year in a row. In partnership with Southern Area Health Education Center (SoAhec), staff put on a day of health workshops, a teen dance with HIV training, and a

community health fair. Over 600 residents participated with events in both Columbus, New Mexico and Palomas, Mexico. Center enrollment has remained constant at 20-50 children. The current challenge is helping all staff to pass their GED exams, which is necessary if the Center is to meet new State licensing requirements. Sarah Dobbs, a CDC intern from the Border Servant Corps, has been working with the women. She says they are making great progress.

Chaparral: The Chaparral group worked to begin construction of the Chaparral Family Development Center. We expect

construction to be completed by fall 2006. The group is developing a membership structure that is inclusive but rigorous enough to ensure smooth operation of the Center and its programs. The group has also engaged in substantial capacity-building. For example, two members are coming to CDC offices once a week to learn accounting and financial management.

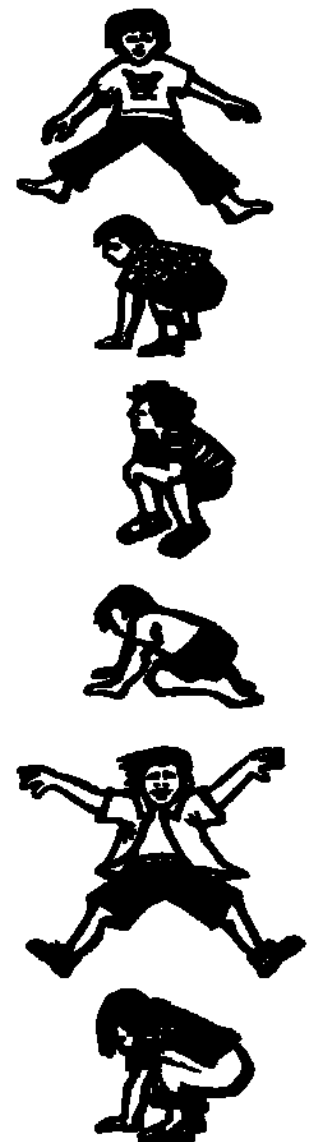
The Compressed Earth Block Project: In 2005, CDC purchased a machine to produce compressed earth blocks (CEBs). We are now working to develop a CEB business as an area source of environmentally-friendly, culturally-relevant, energy-efficient building material

for self-help and affordable housing. Patrick Wenger was hired to manage the project. The project received invaluable assistance from the New Mexico State University's Engineering Department. Now CDC is testing CEBs and developing a marketing strategy. This project will create jobs and an innovative new construction material to support the area's booming construction field.

The Anthony Vendor Market: CDC is working with a group of small vendors to create a vendor market, which we see as a potentially strong community-based economic development venture.

"CDC's economic development programs are growing, but one thing that has remained the same is that we focus on projects that are community-based and whose purpose is to build capacity. For us there is no economic development without social purpose."

Diana Bustamante
Executive Director



“Whatever happens, we know CDC will be there and will keep pushing us. That is a small thing, but it keeps us making progress. It gives us the confidence to keep growing. That is the best thing about the CDC for me—knowing that they will be there.”

MAAC Member
Chaparral

Farm worker Organizing

Last year, CDC partnered with the El Paso Centro De Los Trabajadores Agrícolas Fronterizos to address area farm worker issues through the Save the Chile Pickers Campaign. Due to the mechanization of the chile and onion harvests, 15,000 farm worker jobs are expected to be lost in this area over the next 5 years. CDC also worked with the Centro to profile area farm workers by reviewing 400

files collected by the Centro on area farm worker. In addition, 80 additional farm workers were surveyed. This information was used to help develop a Memorial on Displaced Farmworkers drafted by New Mexico State Representative Antonio Luján. This effort was also supported by a coalition of 9 local organizations called Friends and Advocates of Farm workers (FAF). In June 2005, CDC and the

Centro also provided 6 trainings to 50 area farm workers on labor law and other key topics. In December 2005, CDC collaborated with Southern New Mexico Legal Aid (SNMLA) to hold two legal clinics for farm workers in Hatch and Anthony. Over 50 local farmworkers attended. Next year CDC and SNMLA will provide regular legal consultations to farm workers on labor, housing, and immigration.

Education Organizing

Community groups in the Hatch Valley have long expressed concern about the local schools and the outcomes of Latino Students. District statistics bear out this concern, showing low test scores and high dropout rates. In response to community input, CDC worked with Dr. Michele Valverde, an education

consultant to develop The Report Card for Success Project. The Project aims to build parent involvement in the schools and nurture leadership skills in parents and youth that will help them work for the academic success of Hatch’s Latino students. Phase One of the Project consisted of 68 in-depth interviews with

students, parents, and teachers. CDC has now moved into Phase Two, which focuses on parent capacity-building and organizing. CDC’s new youth organizer, Mauricio de Segovia, is helping in this effort. Already parents are getting more involved with positive results such as gaining more school materials in Spanish.

“The Report Card for Success is about making schools work for everyone. How? We start by listening to all the stakeholders. If we can get a good map of what is going on, we can begin to see how to change it.”

Dr. Michele Valverde
Director,
The Report Card
for Success Project



Immigration and Civil Rights

Last year, CDC formed a partnership with the American Friends Service Committee (AFSC) to spark local involvement in AFSC’s national Project Voice Program, which seeks to build the contribution of immigrant communities to the national immigration debate. CDC organizer Veronica Carmona jump-started these efforts by attending a 3-day convening

in Phoenix, Arizona in February 2005. In May 2005, she was part of the Project Voice Delegation at the Global Commission of International Migration (GCIM) in Mexico City, Mexico. The AFSC Delegation was signaled out by the Secretariat as having a major impact on the Conference, which issued a strong declaration affirming the

human rights of migrants. CDC contributed to and endorsed this declaration. Originally AFSC had hoped to be able to establish a local immigration committee to serve southern New Mexico. However, the planned local component of AFSC support never materialized. As a result, in July 2005, CDC also became a member of the National Network for Immigrant and Refugee



Immigration and Civil Rights (Continued)

Rights (NNIRR) and committed to hiring several promotoras de comunidad to provide outreach on immigration and farm worker rights. This is a needed step, since in CDC's Hatch office alone, 156 people requested and received immigration assistance last year. In October 2005, two CDC staff members attended a two-day "Know Your Rights" training from NNIRR in Oakland, CA. Later in the month, two CDC staff organizers and five youth from Sunland Park went to Santa Fe and

received training on documentation of immigrant abuses from Somos Un Pueblo Unido of Santa Fe. In fall 2005, the arrival of the border vigilante group, the Minutemen Project, sparked increased local action and concern around immigration. Twenty CDC and community leaders participated in a protest march on July 23, 2005 in Las Cruces. The Congreso action on October 8, 2005 in Sunland Park (described above) also dealt with immigration concerns. On November 19, CDC and Somos Un Pueblo also

coordinated a "Know Your Rights" event in Las Cruces that 28 people attended. CDC staff and community members also participated in ACLU trainings on how to be a legal observer and monitor the Minutemen Project. In November 2005, colonia leader Irma Castaneda coordinated 2 "Know Your Rights" trainings in Chaparral; 30 residents participated. CDC also worked with SNMLA, as previously described, to develop legal clinics that include immigration concerns..

"If I had to name a single issue that drives conditions in colonias it would be immigration. By linking immigration with other colonia issues, we see how they can all be understood through a human rights perspective—understood holistically. Only then can we begin to conceive of the solutions."

Diana Bustamante
Executive Director



Environmental Justice

Environmental justice issues continue to be a pressing concern in area colonias. This year CDC continued to pursue its appeal of the Chaparral Landfill Decision. Three years after the Chaparral community organized to oppose the landfill, the case was finally heard by the New Mexico State Supreme Court on June 14, 2005. CDC Executive Director, Diana Bustamante, and 7 Chaparral community leaders attended the hearing. In July 2005, CDC received the tremendous news that the State Supreme Court had found in CDC's favor on all counts. The court agreed

with CDC's contention that the problems with the State landfill application process are: 1) Community input is given no real weight; 2) There is no consideration of social impact; and 3) There is inadequate environmental health assessment and no method of considering the cumulative effect of multiple landfills or waste facilities on one community. The landfill decision was overturned pending new public hearings designed to address these questions. CDC is now working to prepare for these hearings, which are scheduled for November 2006. CDC also worked with the

Environmental Justice Working Group (EJWG),. The EJWG is working to ensure that social justice language is incorporated in State regulations and to gain the adoption of the Healthy Communities Act, which revises how environmental risk is assessed. Also, CDC worked with Southwest Network for Environmental and Economic Justice (SNEEJ) to gain passage of the Executive Order on Environmental Justice, which was passed in November 2005. CDC also continued its clean-up program, which has resulted in 17 clean-ups in 7 communities, involving

"The community garden project in Rincon is bringing together so many things I've been working on—environmental justice, health, youth, education. It is exciting to see how pieces sometimes do fall together."

Mary Ann Benavidez
Community Organizer



“Sometimes the battle over Chaparral landfill feels like David and Goliath. But every time I get discouraged, I take heart in what is happening in the community—how much people are learning and growing into a vision of grassroots environmental justice.”

Diana Bustamante
Executive Director

Environmental Justice (Continued)

over 600 residents. CDC also provided training on environmental codes, solid waste and pesticides in 5 communities, reaching over 500 colonia residents. CDC also built a new partnership with the Energy Center at the University of Texas in El Paso (UTEP) to provide energy efficiency trainings and to administer a loan fund designed to help colonia residents replace old energy-guzzling refrigerators with

new energy-efficient refrigerators. Researchers at UTEP have found that this can cut the energy costs of colonia residents by up to 50%. In collaboration with UTEP, CDC provided 3 financial literacy/energy efficiency training series in area colonias. CDC also worked to develop a vibrant community garden and training program in Rincon, New Mexico; 20 families have joined the garden

effort. The goal of this initiative and CDC’s other environmental justice training efforts is perhaps best expressed by Mary Ann Benavidez who says: “We want to give residents the knowledge and resources to define what a concept like environmental justice means on the ground, in each community, and what action each community can take to make it happen.”

Our 2004-2005 Budget

Income

Columbus Child Development Center	\$ 93,034.56
Contributions	\$ 7,012.11
Grants	\$446,411.19
Interest Income	\$ 403.25
Reimbursed Expenses	\$ 41,883.60
Rents	\$ 20,460.00
Total Income	\$609,204.71

Expenses

Advertising	\$ 117.29
Continuing Education	\$ 1,999.92
Contract Labor	\$ 5,919.95
Equipment	\$ 5,766.35
Fundraising	\$ 1,160.28
Insurance	\$ 46,243.40
Interest	\$ 11,352.51
Miscellaneous	\$ 2,119.71
Operations	\$
Professional Fees	\$ 24,022.49
Salaries	\$315,576.52
Supplies	\$ 29,042.70
Taxes	\$ 27,504.06
Transportation	\$ 17,465.74
Total Expenses	\$537,716.59



Our Board of Directors

President

Rudolfo Chávez Chávez

Treasurer

Diana A. Bustamante

Eva Lee

Cruz Febres

Blanca Gonzalez

Juan Jaramillo

Marie González

Carlos Corral

Kathleen Baca

Community

at-large member

Non-voting

Chaparral

Chaparral

Las Palmeras

El Milagro

Rincón

at-large member

at-large member



Our Funders and Contributors

CDC is exceedingly grateful to all our donors. Our work would not be possible without your support.

Foundations and Organizations:

Albertson’s Community Partnership Program, Basilian Fathers of Toronto, Ben and Jerry’s Foundation, Marguerite Casey Foundation, Catholic Campaign for Human Development, Community Foundation of Southern New Mexico, Catholic Diocese of Las Cruces, Daniels Fund, Dona Ana County, Dona Ana Advocates, Environmental Protection Agency, Frost Foundation, HUD’s Rural Housing and Economic Development Program, Leadership for a Changing World, McCune Foundation, Ms. Foundation, New

Mexico Community Foundation, New Mexico Women’s Foundation, Norman Foundation, Public Welfare Foundation, Raskob Foundation, Solidago Foundation, Southwest Center for Culture, Tierra del Sol Housing Corporation, Tides Foundation, Unitarian Universalist Veatch Program at Shelter Rock.

Individuals:

Michelle Agee, Philip Alvarez Pamela Atkinson, , Kathleen and Alex Baca, Cynthia Bejarano, Mary Ann Benavidez, Clay Black, Moira Black, Samantha Black, Sheila Black, Jagan Butler, Diana Bustamante, Tammy Campbell, Rita Carbajal, Lucia Carmona, Irma Castañeda, Genevieve Chavez, Rudolfo Chavez-

Chavez, Marta Drury, Christine Eber, L.B. Ewing, Carolyn Dietrich, Amy Guilfooy, Esperanza Holguín, Louise Kahn, Don Kurtz, Mike Lilley, Sylvia Lopez, Antonio Lujan, Sofia Martinez, Molly Molloy, Diane Nowak-Waring, Ann O’Malley, Richard Oliver, Ron Ordansa, Ray Padilla, Olga Pedrosa, Daniel Peterson, Ricardo Ramirez, Marisa Silva, Megan Snedden, Renee Tilton, Elva Villegas, Brenda Villegas, Connie Voisine, Kimberley Warner, Charlotte Williams. We would also like to thank everyone else who purchased calendars, cards, coffee, and raffle tickets or attended any of our fundraisers over the past year.

¡Mil Gracias!

CDC from an Intern’s Perspective by Sarah Dobbs

I started at CDC as a Border Servant Corps volunteer in September. At first, I provided support to existing organizing projects, learning about the different colonias in which we work and attending community meetings and trainings.

Before I came to CDC, a need had arisen for tutors to teach GED classes. The women who work with the Child Development Center in Columbus and those who are working to build the Chaparral Family Development Center have federally mandated dates by which they must take the GED, depending on their position. To meet these goals, I began tutoring in these two colonias in October. Since then, all of the women have improved their math and writing skills, but they are also more confident in their own ability to grasp these complex subjects. I hope that they are as proud of their progress as I am.

At first teaching was a challenge, I was trying to remember how to add and subtract fractions in English and then teach in Spanish. Plus, I only had teaching experience in ESL. However, after a couple of weeks, I felt much

more comfortable. I have grown to enjoy the time I spend with the women and the things they have shared with me about their lives and families. Through their stories, they have told me how they view immigration, why their work is important and how they view their role in the community. Teaching has been an excellent way for me to get to know community members in colonias.

In addition to tutoring, I have also been involved with research and grant writing. I have been helping out with the research on environmental justice issues surrounding the landfills in Chaparral and Sunland Park. Doing research that someone else will compile has been tricky because I don’t have as exact an idea of what will be useful. However, it has helped me learn, from both scholarly and popular articles, about this component of social justice. Grants were a completely new kind of writing for me. As a history major, I wrote a lot for my college classes, but never in the style grants require. As I continue my time with CDC, I hope to become more proficient in this skill.

The trainings I have been helping to develop for the Report Card for Success project have allowed me to become more involved in Hatch and learn about educational equity from a dual class and race perspective. When I first came to CDC, I knew that not all students had an equal opportunity to learn, but I had never been involved in a community in which educational inequality was such a pervasive issue. Through the interviews the rest of the Report Card team did, as well as the trainings we have been preparing for the last 5 months, I have gotten to know the Hatch Valley school system and some of the problems there, but also the desire within the community to embrace their rights to educational equity.

Working with CDC has given me the opportunity to become familiar with communities throughout southern New Mexico in a way that I could not have in many other community organizations. I look forward to taking on new projects and continuing the ones in which I am already involved as I complete my year of service.



Colonias Development Council

1050 Monte Vista
Las Cruces, NM
88001

Phone:
(505) 647-2744

Fax:
(505) 647-1462

E-mail:
sheilaflack@hotmail.com

We're on the Web!

See us at:

www.colonias.org

Support is Always Welcome!

If you would like to make a tax-deductible contribution to the Colonias Development Council please send in this form or contact us at the numbers listed to the right. Thanks!

Name: _____

Address: _____

Phone Number: _____

_____ YES! I want to support the work of the CDC. I am enclosing the following amount: (Please circle) \$25 \$50 \$100 \$500 \$ _____

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