



EL CENTRO NEWS



At El Centro, festive seasons are a team effort-Gracias MEXSA!

El Centro de la Raza Students Are Always Ready to Show Their Unity to Improve Opportunities for Current and Future Students

Raza UNM Students from diverse departments gather together to show the rest of the student community how El Centro de la Raza is a key element keeping them enrolled in academic programs and improving their chances of professional and academic success.

During a hearing with the Student Fee Review Board (SFRB) and the student forums, students and staff shared how El Centro de la Raza is a home where they can find social, emotional and economic support to face some of the hardships of being first generation or underrepresented student on campus.

El Centro asked for an increase of close to \$25,000 to continue funding key programs geared toward students retention in higher education such as the Unidos Project, a program aimed at increasing post secondary education for Latino students.

“We are the fastest growing minority in the United States,” says Adriana Sanchez, a Health Education graduate student. “We need to grow not only in terms of numbers but in educational opportunities.”

Although the results will not be finalized until next year, the staff and students of El Centro are confident that, “la union hace la fuerza.”



Students gather to show support for El Centro de la Raza and ask for resources to continue the “lucha” to educate Latinos and and underrepresented students.

El Centro November Events

Nov. 5 **Diversity in STEM** 12:00-1:00 pm

Nov. 12 **Etiquette Dinner** 5:30-8:30

Nov. 12 **Test Anxiety** 12:00-1:00pm

Nov. 19 **Anger Management** 12:00-1:00

El Centro helps transform individual and community perspectives around the world.



For Saray Argumedo, a UNM graduate student in the Department of Community and Regional Planning, a trip to the State of Chiapas, Mexico was life changing .

Through an academic partnership with Universidad Tecnologica de la Selva, Argumedo was able to spend one and a half months conducting research in Mexico's deep South.

"This experience allowed me to see myself as part of a global community," says Argumedo. "For the first time in my life, I felt alive."

For more information about similar programs contact Jorge Garcia at mexicatf@unm.edu

ROSA'S MONTH IN REVIEW

Regardless of what position one holds at El Centro de la Raza, in this place, we always have the opportunity to analyze who we are as individuals and as group.

During the last month, I've had to deal with a number of health problems and my students and staff had to step up their efforts to keep the the "casa" running smoothly with limited supervision.

I'm happy to report that their efforts and accomplishments would make any leader proud, and I'm convinced that many great things are yet to come for this organization. Our most valuable asset is our human capital.

Although delegating some of my responsibilities to regain strength and recuperate my health was anything but an easy task, I choose to take this approach to develop leadership and continue with our legacy of service and solidarity towards one and other. Once again muchas gracias familia!

Cerebro y Liderazgo - Brian Colón

Cerebro y Liderazgo is dedicated to humanizing and highlighting leaders in our community. We share these stories with our readers with the hope that our leaders can become sources of inspiration to continue moving New Mexico and the world forward. Today we bring you the story of Brian Colón, one of the most well known attorneys and politicians in the state.



One of Brian Colón's mottos: "Your success will be directly proportional to the success you help others achieve."

Many times when others look at individuals who seem to have a life that seems marked by accomplishments, its easy to assume that their current success automatically came to them due to family money, luck, or connections. Yet Brian Colón's path through life has been anything but an easy road to success.

Although his story could easily be interpreted as the typical American story where the hero overcomes every obstacle by the power of his determination and conviction, Colón is the first to admit that in his case, it is community support, a solid family life, determination, and gratitude that continue to push him forward as a human being." I was the beneficiary of every government program around during the eighties, from food stamps to public housing," Says Colón." It's very easy to assume that people who are in government programs are lazy and take advantage of the system, but I can honestly say that my parents where doing the best they could. I had two parents that were ill, one of them dying rapidly in front of my eyes every day."

The deterioration of his father's health due to a chronic illness forced his family to leave the state. But as a high school student, Colón decided to remain by himself in New Mexico to continue his education; a decision that has defined him as a human being, because his father passed away shortly thereafter

"My family and the community always made it clear that they would support me in whatever way it was necessary to help me get through college," he says. "When you are alone and you don't have any family in the state of New Mexico you quickly learn that community is your source of strength."

For Colón, some of the key aspects that gave him the opportunity to move forward and break the cycle of poverty were the support of mentors and community organizations that took a leap of faith in the possibilities of a student that statistically had few chances for success.

Colón is currently mentoring more than 15 students who want to follow his professional career, and he continues to advocate for more opportunities for students to succeed regardless of their economic background, physical appearance, or gender.

"I'm a pecoso and colorado and when I walk in a room people don't have many of the biases that many latinos and other people of color face everyday," says Colón. "That is one of the reasons I surround myself with and support organizations that promote and move cultural and social equality forward."

We select leaders featured in this section through our readers' suggestions. If you have other leaders you would like to see featured, please share your suggestions by sending an email to adrialek@unm.edu.