



Enlace Comunitario

Finding a New Home

It is with much excitement that I share with you great news: last month Enlace Comunitario moved to a beautiful new office complex. Finally EC has a permanent presence in the community (as many of you know we have moved four times in six years).

The building (8,103 SF) has 20 enclosed rooms, which allows our staff of 17 (counselors, attorneys, social workers and administrators) to have confidential offices as well as classrooms for counseling groups, parenting classes, life skills and English as a second Language classes, and children's play therapy. It also has space for a food pantry (EC is a Roadrunner food bank agency) and storage for donations (EC provides clothing and household items to its clients). In addition, it has 29 parking spaces and room to create a playground for children.



Our new home is centrally located and more accessible for our clients most of whom live in the South Valley, Southeast Heights (ninety percent of our clients live in these two areas) and for those clients who come from other counties or rely on public transportation.

I can go on and on about the building but I actually would like to invite all supporters to visit us at this wonderful location.

Selecting, preparing and moving into this new facility was an immense challenge for the staff and board. We wish to

express our gratitude to the many people who volunteered their time and donated money, materials and supplies.

A special thanks to the City of Albuquerque who provided most of the funding to purchase our new home, and to all of you who assisted us, MIL GRACIAS!!!

AND remember "Nuestra Casa es su Casa".

Claudio Medina

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¡Thank you for supporting International Women's Day 2007!

the power of women

be with us.

...more details on page 4

Tomasa's Story

My name is Tomasa and I am 31 years old. I have three daughters aged eleven, nine and six. Five years ago, I left my house with my daughters because my husband had been abusing us for years. In my daughter's school, they recommended that I call Enlace Comunitario (EC). I called EC and they gave me an appointment with a case manager. That same day, my husband found us at a friend's house and tried to force us to leave. I called EC again and they called the police. The police and victim advocates took us to the shelter.

In the shelter, they helped me a lot. In particular, they helped me find an inexpensive apartment, where we still reside. In the meantime, my daughters and I began to participate in the counseling and life skills classes that Enlace Comunitario offers. We were treated very well at all times. They also helped us with different kinds of support such as transportation, clothes, food, store vouchers, and other things. At the same time, Enlace Comunitario helped me get legal assistance to obtain an order of protection, custody, and help with my divorce, which all took two years.

One of the most important things is that EC helped orient me about what I needed to do to legalize my immigration status. I went to Catholic Charities, where they processed my immigration application, and in approximately eight months, I received my first work permit. With this permit, I could get my social security card, and I could begin working legally. After this, I began working at the social security office.

About two years ago, Enlace Comunitario invited me to become a board member. I feel very useful participating in the board, and it is a way that I can pay back a little of the help that they have given to my daughters and me. As a board member, I help EC with fundraising. I also distribute much information about EC, in particular their newsletter, in important places throughout the city. Currently, I am also a part of the new domestic violence advisory committee.

With all of my heart, I want to motivate people who are suffering domestic violence to look for help and orientation. Do it for your children! **We all deserve to live in peace!**



Tomasa

When domestic violence isn't visible but hurts...

When there are no bruises but it hurts... life becomes a horror story. Family and friends don't see or don't believe what happens, but who's living the violence suffers, gets sad, cries...

People living this, can suffer from serious illness such as muscle spasms, temporary loss of sight, insomnia, panic attacks, tachycardia, thyroid problems, depression, low self-esteem, etc.

I came to this country with a "tourist visa." I needed to lie and betray my own values, change my social status. My culture, education, and profession didn't allow me to realize that I was experiencing domestic violence.

The world was moving, but I wasn't in it. I would sleep to avoid thinking and abandoned myself. I felt lonely, powerless, fear, anguish, unable to live and move forward.

One lucky day I came across Enlace Comunitario's telephone number. I called because something was telling me that what I was living and feeling wasn't ok.

After two months, I went to my first appointment and a counselor was assigned to me. With her help, I learned to make significant changes in my life that helped me understand and accept my reality and gave me tools to strengthen my self-esteem and start to solve my problem.

I now smile and want to live. I make new plans. Now I can talk and write about my experience and feel much better. Enlace started to change my life.

Come, you can also learn and find help to better your life. Call now at 505-246-8972

Guadalupe

Questions for the Counselor

By Patricia Telles, Ph.D., Psychologist

My partner constantly accuses me from being unfaithful. He questions me when I return from work, from the store, or from the park with my children. He doesn't have any reason but he doesn't believe me. What can I do so he believes me?

Nothing, your partner is very creative at telling you stories. These beliefs are real or possible for your partner and have nothing to do with you. When someone has insecurities and low self-esteem, he/she fears to lose things and people from his/her life. These fears trigger the person's anger and control as a way to handle the anxiety.

My daughter is 21 years old. She is mad at me because her father and I had lots of problems while living together. Her father abused us and we couldn't live with him. He left us when my daughter was 16. I am not the abuser. Why does she blame me?

For what I understand, I hear that you were a victim and in paralysis. If your husband abused you, your daughter didn't have an adult to protect her. Your daughter, as an adult, doesn't understand why she was "abandoned" and no one cared for her when she was in danger. She was a child who couldn't count on any of her parents. Your daughter's anger is based on the lack of respect and confidence that she didn't have towards her parents who were responsible for taking care of her. You have the opportunity to restore the damage and understand the trauma that affects you. You were both victims. Family counseling can help you both develop a healthy relationship



My family doesn't accept my partner because he has abused me for many years. Every time we get separated, I go back to my parents or siblings. They tell me that if I get back with him, they don't want to know anything about my problems and that he's not welcomed at their homes. What can I do to change their way of thinking?

Your family wants the best for you. They have supported you for many years and it seems like providing safety for you did not solve anything. They have reached their limits. It's true that they're not helping you better your situation. They have the right to open or close the door to your partner because he is causing damage to you and they don't accept that behavior. You need to understand that you're repeating the cycle of domestic violence. If you have children, I can assure they are victims and they deserve a life without violence. I recommend that you seek help for you and your children. The cycle has to end.

I left my husband after 11 years of marriage because he started abusing me 8 months ago. My 10 year old son has become aggressive with me. He tries to control me and threatens me like his father. Why is he mistreating me when he used to protect me from his father?

Your child has been affected by witnessing violence. Furthermore, if he used to intervene during a fight to protect you, he has the idea that he is the one with the most power at home. Now that his father is not at home, he has the idea that he is "the man" of the house. Being a man is the model he's been shown as a result of the dynamics between his parents. He doesn't know that you are the adult who sets the limits and rules at home. He has the idea that you both are equal. He doesn't understand that your role as a mother is to protect and take care of him and be the "head of the household." I suggest you seek family therapy to change these dynamics.

International Women's Day 2007

March 8th, International Women's Day, was selected by Enlace Comunitario to launch our first annual celebration to raise funds and expand our circle of support. Through participation in this global celebration of women, we provide a grassroots method to honor and recognize women locally.

We invited all community members to help us to recognize "Women of Enlace Comunitario" – or any woman who reflects the values and work of Enlace Comunitario. In response to honoraria gifts, we mailed a postcard to each woman honoree informing her that someone made a contribution in her name.

Honorees

Adelfa Reyna Munguía
 Amalia Plaza Domínguez
 Ann Penn
 Antoinette Tellez-Humble
 Barbara Dest
 Bernardette Chacon
 Claudia Medina
 Dorelen Bunting
 Evelyn Bonilla-Montañez
 Evelyn O'Brien Rose
 Jennifer Backstrom
 Jennifer Metzler
 Jill Baker
 Joan Metzler
 Josefina de Medina
 Julie Rosen
 Katherine Andres Moore
 Kim Zamarin
 Linda Gilkey (En Memoria)
 Lois Mae Stoker (En Memoria)
 Margarita López
 Marta Bonilla ORR
 Miriam Rand
 Parker Davidson (En Memoria)
 Phoebe Sultzler (En Memoria)
 Rosa Mercedes Bonilla (En Memoria)
 Roberta Rael
 Ruth Shy
 Summers Kalishman
 Susan Maguire
 Sr. Jackie Perez
 Mujeres trabajando por Igualdad y Justicia
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Organizations/Businesses

Aspen Printing
 Las Meganenas
 SouthWest Organizing Project
 The UNM Women's Resource Project



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 Sigrid E. Olson
 Sundance Dental Lab
 Suzanne Farley
 Terry Schleder

It's not too late to honor women. Call Virginia 246-8972, ext 13

Volunteering

By Sandra Ortsman

The volunteer program is an integral part of Enlace Comunitario. The success of our program is largely dependent on having a team of caring, compassionate and skilled volunteers.

Every week, Marisa, Laura, Elisabeth, Doña Virginia, and Leslie work with the toddlers groups. María José, Ebony and Angelina assist Maribel with Enlace Comunitario's children ages 6-12 teaching about non-violence while fostering self-esteem and group trust.

An additional five volunteers from APS Community Transition to Adult Programs come on a weekly basis to help us with clerical and other duties. Teachers Steve Schan and Frances Armijo say that the relationship is mutually beneficial because "students get to experience being in the community while gathering work skills through the volunteer experiences".

Our ESL class is taught by volunteer teacher and former Board member Pat Bonilla. We would not have been able to move to our new building this March without the volunteer painting crew and the volunteer movers; we had a lot of fun with our volunteer moving crew from the Starbucks Downtown.



Ebony(left) and Marisa (right)



ESL Teacher Pat Bonilla



Maria José & children of EC

What the Volunteers Say:

We hope that volunteers gain a sense of satisfaction knowing that they are helping someone work towards a violence-free life. When asked why they volunteer at Enlace Comunitario, Leslie says, "I enjoy volunteering with Enlace for the caring environment and the organization's ability to reach a vulnerable population with thoughtfulness and organization". In particular, María José thinks that "the group of children she works with provides a vehicle for larger social change". Marisa says "It [Enlace] is more than just an organization, but a community of strong women who work together and support each other to fight for women's rights".

Getting Involved:

No matter what your skills are, Enlace Comunitario can use your help. Volunteers come from a variety of backgrounds and include women, men, students, professionals, grandparents, and community activists. Prior experience working with domestic violence is not a requirement, but a commitment to social justice is. We also ask that volunteers make a three month commitment. If you would like to volunteer at Enlace Comunitario, please call Sandra at: 246-8972 (ext. 12) or email sortsman@enlacenm.org.

We want to Thank the following entities for their generous support provided to Enlace Comunitario to acquire and remodel the new building.

AM Telephone, Bruce Chavez
 Community Against Violence, Inc. Malinda Dunnam
 Costco (Eubank), Bernadette Romero
 Costco (Renaissance), Angelina
 CVRC, Larry Tackman
 Pauline Esquivel and her Family
 Home Depot (Eubank), Masheka Christianson
 Home Depot (Renaissance), Florence Madrid
 Home Depot (Coors), Debbie Neil
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Office Systems Installations, Nick Chavez
 PNM, Fermin Cordova
 Ron Romero Inc., Ron Romero
 Sherwin Williams, Justin White
 Starbucks (Downtown), Allison Cattin
 The City of Albuquerque, Mayor Martin Chavez
 WalMart (Academy), Angy Regales
 WalMart (San Mateo), Tony Santini
 Whole Foods, Matthew Herman

Thanks to our Funders

Albuquerque Community Foundation
 CCHD—Catholic Campaign for Human Development
 City of Albuquerque
 CLS (Civil Legal Services Commission)
 CTF—Children’s Trust Fund
 CYFD—Children Youth and Family Department
 CVRC—Crime Victims Reparation Commission (VOCA & VAWA)
 IOLTA
 McCune Foundation
 New Mexico Community Foundation
 Rape Crisis Center of Central New Mexico
 State Bar of New Mexico
 United Way of Central New Mexico
 Verizon Wireless
 New Mexico Victims Right Project

Enlace Comunitario thanks YOU, individuals and businesses, for your continuous support!

Thanks to everyone who helped us paint and move to the new building.

Fo questions or suggestions about this newsletter, contact Virginia 246-8972, vperez@enlacenm.org

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To support our mission to *eliminate domestic violence and advance immigrants’ rights*, you can:

1. Send a tax deductible donation
2. Contribute to our newsletter
3. Become a volunteer

Write to us at

P.O. Box 8919,
 Albuquerque, NM 87198,
 Tel. 246-8972, Fax. 246-8973
www.enlacenm.org

Yes! I want to support Enlace Comunitario

\$250 \$100 \$50 \$20 Otro

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