

Healthy Kids Healthy Communities

Building a Fit Future

A Healthy Kids New Mexico publication

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Healthy Kids Healthy Communities Statewide Coalition Celebrates Food & Farms Day at the Legislature!

On a brisk January day in Santa Fe, the NMDOH Obesity, Nutrition & Physical Activity program, HKHC coordinators from across the state, key partners such as Farm to Table, and other state and local organizations gathered at the capitol to celebrate a noteworthy cause: the intersection between food, farming, and health. We're talking about Food & Farms Day / School Nutrition Day, which was created in recent years to recognize community programs and leaders who prioritize equitable food access and invest in local farmers, local communities, and the health of our kids.



HKHC photo op with Senator Pete Campos, who continues to support legislation allocating funds for New Mexico-grown produce in school meals

Throughout the day, HKHC coordinators had the unique chance to meet and visit with their local representatives on the House and Senate floors. Most importantly, they were able to provide information about obesity prevention at the local level and highlight their efforts to increase healthy eating and physical activity opportunities in schools, expand food access, and improve the environment in their communities.



HKHC Zuni Pueblo coordinators Andrea Pepin and Jessica Quinlan meet with Senator Pinto



HKHC Colfax County coordinator Emma Green and Senator Campos discuss local HKHC efforts



NMDOH Deputy Secretary Dr. Abinash Achrekar presents School Garden of the Year Award to James Elementary in Portales

At the root of Food & Farms Day is the awards ceremony, which shines a light on the positive impact communities across New Mexico are having on the local food system. Organizations and leaders in three HKHC communities received awards this year for their commitment towards improving food access, incorporating New Mexico-grown produce into school meals, and connecting students with the concept of growing and tasting the fruits of their labor.



HKHC Cibola County coordinator Julie Hildago meets with Senator Sanchez



HKHC Chaves County coordinators Paula Camp & Becky Joyce with Buz Graves and his son, Andrew, of Graves Farm



HKHC San Juan County coordinator Patience Williams (left) with School Food Service Director of the Year, Marie Johnson

Newly appointed NMDOH Deputy Secretary Dr. Abinash Achrekar was on hand to present School Garden of the Year award to HKHC Roosevelt County coordinator Caron Powers and a group of school staff representing James Elementary. The James school garden has grown exponentially over the past few years and now features 24 raised beds, one for each classroom! Additionally, Buz Graves of Roswell was recognized as Farmer of the Year and Marie Johnson of Farmington Schools was recognized as Food Service Director of the Year. We are incredibly fortunate to work with such passionate individuals and congratulate each of you on your continual efforts to improve the health of your students and communities!



Whole Foods Community Giving Day: Supporting Local Farm to School Initiatives!



We would like to extend a heartfelt **THANK YOU!** to Whole Foods Market for selecting HKHC and Farm to Table NM as recipients of their Community Giving Day this past month!! On January 10th, 5% of the day's net sales across all three New Mexico stores were set aside to support local farm to school and other healthy eating initiatives in schools throughout the state. The total amounts to **\$13,396**, which our HKHC coordinators will use to expand access to healthy, affordable, locally-grown food in their communities.

HKHC and the Farm to Table team participated in Community Giving Day by manning a table at the Whole Foods store in Santa Fe, sharing information about our programs, and providing free materials. Shoppers stopped by regularly, drawn in by the colorful selection of Dinky books near the front of the table. Sometimes kids would walk up slowly and eye the books, and we gladly handed them a full set in English and/or Spanish while gently emphasizing the importance of practicing healthy habits.

Whole Foods Market first implemented quarterly Community Giving Days in 1993, during which 5% of the day's net sales are donated to support local non-profit or educational associations that align with the corporation's core values. Thank you to Whole Foods Market and all of you who came to shop on January 10th to support healthy eating in New Mexico's elementary schools!



Whole Foods will donate 5% on January 10

Shop any of the Whole Foods Market New Mexico locations on January 10 and 5% of the day's sales will benefit Farm to Table and Healthy Kids Healthy Communities!

Funds raised will support farm to school initiatives in New Mexico focusing on healthy eating and physical activity, school gardens, hoop houses, nutrition and health education, and more!



Remembering Our Dear Friend and Colleague, Tamara Fresquez



We'd like to pay loving tribute to Tamara Fresquez, one of the first people we met and worked with when Healthy Kids Healthy Communities, and Healthy Kids Healthy Chaves County, was in its infancy. Tamara passed away after a brave battle with cancer on October 11th in her home. She was surrounded by her husband Ken and daughters Elizabeth and Alexandra as well as her mother, brothers, and close friends.

Tamara was our first HKHC Chaves County coordinator, and she laid the groundwork and built support for implementing sustainable healthy eating and physical activity initiatives in Chaves County. A retired third grade teacher, Tamara understood the needs and challenges of schools and how to work effectively in the school setting. She recruited current Chaves County coordinator Paula Camp, another retired third grade teacher, to join the effort. A dream team who made things happen!

When it was time to find someone to coordinate statewide BMI surveillance, Tamara was the first person who came to mind. She was outstanding in this role and cultivated lasting relationships with schools, nursing programs, and partners across the state. She traveled all over New Mexico and trained hundreds of nurses, nursing students, and volunteers on how to conduct BMI surveillance. Tamara was an integral part of the HKHC Chaves County and ONAPA teams, and her presence as both a friend and colleague is greatly missed.

Tamara was hard-working, patient, gentle, thoughtful, and an absolute joy to work with. She always maintained a positive outlook and strived to live each day thankfully and with grace. We miss her, think of her often, and remember her with love.



Tamara with Paula Camp, Becky Joyce, Caron Powers & Debbie Gentry, good friends and HKHC SE region team



HKHC Schools Across NM Recognized for Nutrition and Physical Activity Excellence

Congratulations!

Really, **congratulations!!** It's taken a few years and a lot of perseverance ... but New Mexico is finally the proud recipient of a big handful of awards celebrating schools going above and beyond for their students!

41 public elementary schools in **7** HKHC counties have earned HealthierUS School Challenge (HUSSC) awards from the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) for their commitment towards improving the school nutrition and physical activity environments and investing in the health of their students. **20** schools received Silver awards and **21** schools received Bronze, bringing a total of \$30,500 (\$1,000 for Silver and \$500 for Bronze per school) to awarded schools!

Sponsored by the USDA Food and Nutrition Service, the HUSSC is a voluntary national certification recognizing schools that have taken a leadership role to create healthier environments, support better food choices, and provide students with nutrition education, physical education, and opportunities for physical activity. To qualify for an award, a school must submit a formal application, adopt USDA standards for foods served in schools, and agree to provide nutrition education and opportunities for physical activity.

Schools must also have an updated wellness policy. Our team within the Obesity, Nutrition & Physical Activity (ONAPA) program partners with the Public Education Department (PED) to train school staff on updating, strengthening, and implementing required school nutrition and physical activity wellness policies. "These awards showcase what can be accomplished when two state agencies work together towards a common goal," says Alyssa Renwick, ONAPA team member, "plus, it's fun!" ONAPA Epidemiologist Leah Yngve adds, "Our partnership with PED has also allowed us to expand our statewide reach to provide support for healthy eating and physical activity to New Mexico's schools. It's very rewarding having such a close relationship with our partners at PED. And, I agree with Alyssa - it's fun, too."

We'd like to congratulate our local HKHC community coalition coordinators in Chaves, Cibola, Curry, Hidalgo, Roosevelt, San Juan, and Socorro counties, who worked closely with their schools and districts to complete the extensive HUSSC application.

Beth Cox, HKHC Hidalgo County Coordinator, sums it up well: "Animas school staff are committed to upholding and building school wellness and this award highlights their hard work and dedication. When students see the HUSSC award banner they'll feel the sense of pride that comes with this accomplishment. Also, it's important to our community to know the school is making every effort to create a healthy school environment."

Please see below for a complete list of awardees!

Chaves County: Roswell School District

- Berrendo (silver)
- Del Norte (silver)
- East Grand Plains (silver)
- El Capitan (silver)
- Military Heights (silver)
- Missouri Avenue (silver)
- Monterrey (silver)
- Nancy Lopez (silver)
- Pecos (silver)
- Sunset (silver)
- Valley View (silver)
- Washington Avenue (bronze)

Curry County: Clovis School District

- Arts Academy (bronze)
- Barry (bronze)
- Cameo (bronze)
- Highland (bronze)
- James Bickley (bronze)
- La Casita (bronze)
- Lockwood (bronze)
- Mesa (bronze)
- Parkview (bronze)
- Sandia (bronze)
- Zia (bronze)

Hidalgo County: Animas School District

- Animas (bronze)

Roosevelt County: Portales School District

- RM James (silver)

San Juan County: Central School District

- Eva B Stokely (bronze)
- Judy Nelson (bronze)
- Kirtland (bronze)
- Mesa (bronze)
- Naschitti (bronze)
- Newcomb (bronze)
- Nizhoni (bronze)
- Ojo Amarillo (bronze)

Socorro County: Socorro School District

- Parkview (silver)

Cibola County: Grants Cibola School District

- Bluewater (silver)
- Cubero (silver)
- Mesa View (silver)
- Milan (silver)
- Mount Taylor (silver)
- San Rafael (silver)
- Seboyeta (silver)

Checking Annual Obesity Surveillance Off Our Lists!



Despite challenges and unforeseeable events, most notably losing our friend, colleague, and statewide BMI surveillance coordinator Tamara Fresquez, our team banded together to complete BMI surveillance in **87** public elementary schools across NM between the beginning of the school year and Thanksgiving. With help from HKHC coordinators and nursing programs, we measured **9,600** kindergarten and third grade students! We've been busy entering and analyzing piles of data to inform reports sent to participating schools about the weight status of their students as well as our annual statewide childhood obesity report which will be released in March. Stay tuned!



Reviving Traditional Gardening in Ohkay Owingeh Pueblo

Increasing community access to fresh fruits & vegetables has been quite a successful endeavor in Ohkay Owingeh Pueblo this year. At the end of the 2018 growing season, 1,816 pounds of produce was harvested from one hoop house and the pueblo's two-acre community garden!

The effort was spearheaded and led by Jennifer Denipah, HKHC Ohkay Owingeh Pueblo Coordinator, Carol Cruz, Diabetes Wellness Center Manager, and Sharon Gerena, Ohkay Owingeh Nurse Diabetes Educator. The trio oversaw the planting, maintenance, and harvest, and joined Ohkay Owingeh general assistance members when it was time to plant seeds, pull weeds, water, and reap the rewards. And what a harvest it was: white corn, multi-colored corn, green beans, tomatoes, chile peppers, cantaloupe, kidney beans, watermelon, honey dew melon, and 572 edible pumpkins! Produce was distributed thoughtfully and with Ohkay Owingeh tribal members in mind. Each of the 80 students - from kindergarten through sixth grade - at the Ohkay Owingeh community school participated in Tewa language classroom pumpkin tasting lessons featuring pumpkins from the garden. They also took home their own pumpkin and recipes to make with their families. Some of the harvest was given to the senior center for their senior meal program, and some to general assistance tribal members who worked every day in the garden. Tribal members who permitted use of their land for the community garden in exchange for some of the harvest received their share and the tribal council was given produce for feast days and traditional tribal holiday celebrations.



The Ohkay Owingeh community is deeply committed to teaching their children how food is grown. The Head Start program has its own hoop house and raised bed garden where they plant and harvest a variety of produce, and the community school recently established four raised bed gardens in an effort to instill healthy habits and practice healthy eating behaviors at an early age.

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Meet Jennifer Denipah, Healthy Kids Healthy Ohkay Owingeh Pueblo Coordinator!



Jennifer Denipah received her bachelor's degree in Environmental Science from Northern New Mexico College with a focus on Sustainable Agriculture. Farming has been her passion for as long as she can remember, and she believes plants and humans share a special connection which is a vital part of our health. Jennifer joined the HKHC team in July 2018 to bring together sustainable farming, health, Tewa language, and traditions to Ohkay Owingeh Pueblo because they are all connected and contribute to who we are as Native People.

As a tribal member of Ohkay Owingeh, she supports increasing agriculture in her community because less and less of her people are growing their own food. As a mother of a growing pre-teen girl, Jennifer thinks it's important for our youth to develop healthy eating habits and do more physical activity to break away from obesity and other health problems such as diabetes that are linked to how we eat and live.

In addition to her passion for agriculture and healthy eating, Jennifer is a DJ for *The Moccasin Wire*, KTAO 101.9 Radio Station in Taos, NM. *The Moccasin Wire* is the only Native American Music on air that includes the traditional genre to contemporary and everything in between. She announces HKHC fun walks/runs and other upcoming community events throughout the show. As a traditional and contemporary artist, Jennifer makes traditional clothing for ceremonies as well as beading, wood carving, painting, and willow basket making. She believes as Native people our path to health is tying traditions to everyday life, especially our diet.

Welcome Jennifer, we're happy to have you on board!

Shout Out to Our Partners - Cooking with Kids!



We'd like to acknowledge our fabulous partners, Shana Woodworth and Anna Farrier from Cooking with Kids, for their fun, lively, and informative training on healthy cafeteria promotions during our HKHC January training! Thank you, Shana & Anna!



Celebrating New Mexico Grown Week & Farm to School Month

In a concerted effort to highlight local produce, farmers, and school nutrition, HKHC coordinators and partners joined together to celebrate the first ever NM Grown Week October 1st - 5th (the first week of Farm to School Month) in cafeterias and classrooms across the state! The NM legislature allocated \$425,000 to the Public Education Department for providing grant funding to districts for purchasing locally-grown produce for school meals in the 2018-19 school year; 15 HKHC elementary schools were awarded a total of \$113,750.

Here's what some schools did to celebrate NM Grown Week:



James elementary school garden in Portales



Raton Intermediate school (3rd - 6th graders) conducted fruit & veggie tastings in the cafeteria featuring New Mexico-grown apples, carrots, and watermelons. Over 100 parents and students also attended a cooking class at the school and learned to make hummus, which they enjoyed with local carrots, flatbread, healthy no-bake oatmeal cookies, and fruit salad made with local apples and watermelons. It was a huge success!

RV Traylor elementary in Lordsburg held a poster contest celebrating Farm to School Month. The theme was "holiday meals" and students created pictures of healthy holiday feasts celebrating the harvest, including fruits and vegetables grown in New Mexico. Posters were hung in the school halls and cafeteria.



Elementary schools in Silver City and Cobre conducted classroom tasting lessons using pomegranates and figs grown in Silver City, apples from Mimbres, and tomatoes and melons grown in Deming. Students at Stout elementary planted carrots and radishes in the new greenhouse donated to their school by a local farmer. The Grant County Board of Commissioners also proclaimed October 2018 as Farm to School Month and the first week of October as New Mexico Grown Week in honor of the partnership between local farmers, ranchers, and public schools.

In Chaves County, cafeterias in Roswell and Dexter highlighted locally grown melons and squash from Graves Farm throughout the week, as they do every week it is available, and Paula Camp actively promoted NM Grown Week on the radio.

Students at James elementary in Portales harvested vegetables from their school garden and learned how to make veggie quesadillas (with a mini math lesson on fractions when the quesadillas were cut into triangles).



Community Snapshot: *Making Connections in Raton*

HKHC coordinators focus much of their attention on healthy eating initiatives, yes, but they are also tasked with making their communities more walkable and bikeable. The federal Transportation Alternatives Program, or TAP, provides valuable funding for bicycle and pedestrian projects at the local level. However, as Emma Green in Colfax County learned, navigating the application process is far from straightforward. Soon after jumping on board as the HKHC Colfax County Coordinator, Emma identified an infrastructure gap in her community: the road from Raton to Sugarite State Park lacks a shoulder for approximately half a mile. If a shoulder were installed, Raton residents would have a safe route for bicycling to Sugarite. With this idea in mind, Emma began making connections, garnering community support, and working through the governmental processes necessary to submit a TAP application. Emma successfully got her project on the city and county Infrastructure Capital Improvement Plan lists and submitted a TAP project feasibility form, aided in part by key partners including county commissioner Mary Lou Harris, HKHC Active Transportation Consultant Tim Rogers, and Jeff DeBellis of UNM Viva Connects. She was on a roll! Unfortunately, when matching funds required for TAP recipients were not secured, Emma decided to withdraw her application. The project is not being abandoned though - Emma plans to build even more support over the next two years so when the next TAP cycle arrives, she'll be able to take it and run!

Bicycle/Pedestrian Routes between downtown Raton & Sugarite State Park



- NM72: Paved Shoulders
- NM72: No Paved Shoulders
- NM72: No Paved Shoulders / Proposed Addition of Paved Shoulders (c. ½ mile)
- Alternate Route using residential streets, NM72, and NM526
- * = Consider Shared-lane arrows ("Sharrows")



Walk to School Day 2018 set a new participation record with over 5,600 registered events across the country! We'd like to recognize all students, parents, and school staff who walked and biked to school on October 10th! New Mexico had 68 schools (52 of them HKHC schools!) officially registered online to participate. This marks our highest statewide participation yet! National Bike to School Day on May 8th is just around the corner, so get ready to pedal and be on the lookout for Bike to School Day 2019 registration to open in early March! For additional information and resources, check out the Walk & Bike to School website: <http://www.walkbiketoschool.org/>

Putting the **FUN** in Fundraising!



Gone are the days of bake sales and candy bars in Roswell schools ... because color runs are all the rage! Healthy fundraising has always been a sticking point for HKHC schools, and it was in the beginning for Roswell, too. But Becky Joyce and Paula Camp gradually built support among their 13 elementary schools and, one by one,

schools jumped on the healthy fundraising bandwagon. Now, many schools incorporate fundraising into their regular Walking Wednesday programs, another initiative the dynamic duo established over the past few years. Becky and Paula also help schools organize special events like color runs and turkey trots to raise money. So, who says fundraising can't be healthy, fun, and lucrative? In the 2017-18 school year alone, Roswell elementary schools raised **\$29,780** through physical activity fundraisers!

The precedent set forth in Roswell is catching on in other parts of the state. In Portales, Caron Powers is working with James Elementary to use their annual color run as a healthy fundraiser this spring, with proceeds going towards creating a walking path on the school grounds. And in Grants this past fall, Julie Hidalgo worked with Milan Elementary and 12 community volunteers to hold a first-ever color run fundraiser. More than 25 students and parents participated in the 1-mile run, which raised over \$2,000 for the school!



H'on A:wan Park: Bringing Together Community, Culture & Health in Zuni

Zuni Pueblo has a new community gathering space, and **WOW** is it something! The new 3.5-acre H'on A:wan Park (Zuni for "Belonging to All of Us"), the result of an ArtSpace Community Development Investment grant award to create a true community park with arts and culture as its foundation, celebrated its grand opening this past fall. The park is located in the heart of Zuni's main village and gives community members access to a state-of-the-art facility featuring a full-size athletic turf field, basketball courts, a traditional community garden, a quarter-mile walking trail wrapping around the entire park, nutrition education and physical activity classrooms, water filling stations, and traditional artwork and mural designs nearly everywhere you look!



During the grand opening event, Zuni Youth Enrichment Project (ZYEP) and Blue Cross Blue Shield unveiled new Imagination Playground equipment, a mobile collection of big blue cubes, cylinders, and blocks that allow kids to create a space that can be built and re-built by their imaginations.



The park reflects the true spirit of collaboration and a deep-rooted commitment to community, culture, and health. ZYEP and local artists had a vision to create a community gathering space where kids could learn skills and build the confidence they need to lead a healthy life and grow up to be stronger physically, spiritually, and psychologically.

The park space is designed to facilitate family engagement and active participation in healthy activities while providing learning opportunities about Zuni art, culture, and history. Centralizing community programming at the park will allow ZYEP to expand their reach in alignment with a comprehensive and sustainable approach to address obesity prevention and encourage healthy lifestyle behaviors.

Save the date for our next HKHC Statewide Training:

July 22nd – 24th in Zuni Pueblo!

Location details and agenda forthcoming. We're really looking forward to this one!