

States Engaging Human Need with Community Partners: New Mexico Task Force to End Hunger

According to the most recent U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) data, New Mexico leads the nation in hunger. This means one in six New Mexicans do not know where their next meal will come from.

The New Mexico Task Force to End Hunger is a private and public collaboration comprised of twenty-three individuals all focused on ending hunger in New Mexico.

The Task Force has adopted the “2010 End Hunger New Mexico Plan” (2010 Plan). The overarching goal is to move New Mexico’s National Ranking from #1 to #5 in Food Insecurity in the next three or more years and to assist 35,000 New Mexicans. The five specific goals to reach the overarching goal are:

- 1) Elimination of childhood hunger in New Mexico
- 2) Adequate food for New Mexico Seniors
- 3) Improved access to food in rural and underserved communities
- 4) Full participation in public food assistance programs
- 5) Pervasive awareness of hunger in New Mexico

Private sector interest in helping support the 2010 Plan has been strong. PNM, The McCune Foundation, and the Albuquerque Community Foundation have each pledged \$300,000 toward the Plan. Their pledges will be placed with a non-profit organization which will act as the fiscal agent. Monies from the private sector will be used for transportation, summer programming supporting USDA summer food sites, paying summer food service workers and outreach materials. PNM is on target to raise an additional \$1 million for the 2010 Plan from the private sector.

Early in 2008, twenty-six private and public sector entities came together to discuss resources, communications, policy, and training needs to successfully accomplish the 2010 Plan. Participants included the New Mexico Community Foundation, PNM, Task Force members, U.S. Senator Jeff Bingaman’s office, UNM’s Research Service Learning Program, St. Joseph Health Foundation, and the Food Research and Action Center.

Next steps include establishing three Pilot Program sites for the summer. Hunger is an especially urgent issue in New Mexico during summer months. The three sites hope to feed both school-aged children as well as the elderly.