



2013 Annual Report



Staff

This list reflects only staff members who were employed during the 2013 fiscal year of July 1, 2012 to June 30, 2013

Veronica C García, Ed.D., *Executive Director*
Troy Martinez, *Chief Operating Officer*
Claire Dudley, MPA, *Director of Policy, Research & Advocacy Integration*

Finance Team

Ron Valek, *Chief Financial Officer*
Kwaku Sraha, MBA, *Finance Manager*

Research & Policy Team

Gerry Bradley, MA, *Senior Researcher & Policy Analyst*
Bill Jordan, MA, *Senior Policy Advisor/Governmental Relations*
Christine Hollis, MPH, MPS, *KIDS COUNT Director*
Amber Wallin, MPA, *Research & Policy Analyst*
Nick Estes, JD, *Deputy Policy Director*
Myra Segal, MA, *Deputy Policy Director*
Armelle Casau PhD, *Research & Policy Intern*

Communications Team

Sharon Kayne, *Communications Director*
Alicia Manzano, MPA, *Outreach Director*
Jessica Fulton, *Outreach & Communications Coordinator*

Fund Development & Operations Team

Lori Bachman, MA, *Director of Organizational Planning, Quality Assurance & Fund Development*
Danila Crispin Zidovsky, *Fund Development & Community Relations Officer*
Brian Urban, *Coordinator of Fund Development, Outreach & Membership*
Briget Trujillo, *Executive Assistant*
Juliet Yazzie, *Administrative Assistant*

Board of Directors

This list reflects only board members who were active during the 2013 fiscal year of July 1, 2012 to June 30, 2013

Officers

Joseph Maestas, PE, *Chair*
Debra Baca, *Vice Chair*
Donald Simonson, PhD, *Treasurer (2011)*
Robert P. McNeill, JD, *Treasurer (2012)*
Andrew Hsi, MD, *Secretary (2012)*

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Luis Vargas, MD
Lilly Dow y Garcia Velarde, MPA, PhD
Laurie Weahkee

Mission

Our mission is to champion public policies that improve the status and well-being of New Mexico's children, families, and communities in the areas of health, education, and economic security through credible research and effective advocacy.

Vision

All New Mexico children and families have equitable opportunities to thrive and to achieve their full potential.

From the Executive Director

Dear Friends and Supporters,

I, like some of you reading this report, am what people refer to as the “exception that proves the rule.” I grew up in poverty, but was able to work my way up the economic ladder. Access to a quality education was my way out, and it allowed me not only to join the middle class, but to reach my own potential, and contribute to my community doing what I love.

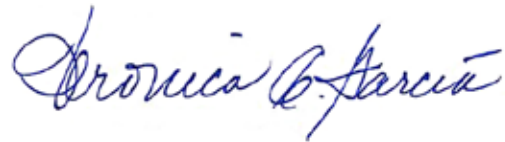
Every child should have the opportunity to reach for their dreams and become a contributing member of society. I’m here to tell you it’s possible. It’s not easy—and it requires outside help and support—but it is possible.

Outside help and support are necessary because poverty often robs children of the opportunities they need to succeed. As a society, we do not quibble with the idea that children who grow up in high-income homes inherit the many advantages that come with financial security. When a well-to-do child grows up only to fall into a life of drugs or crime we are shocked and wonder what went wrong. When a child from poverty grows up to be successful we are not shocked and we don’t ask what went right. We are less open to the idea that children who grow up in poverty inherit the disadvantages that come with low educational levels, poor

wages, and the most debilitating aspect of all: despair. We are more inclined to blame the children who fail to work their way out of poverty. And we do it without accepting the fact that it’s impossible to pull yourself up by your bootstraps when you’re never given boots.

Almost one-third of New Mexico’s children live at or below the poverty level. That’s an income of just over \$19,000 for a family of three. More than half of our children live in low-income households—families earning up to twice that. Unless we ensure that these children have the opportunities they need to reach their potential, the probability is high that many will end up as low-income adults, raising the next generation of children who lack the support systems they need to succeed.

That is not a future we can accept for our children or our state. At New Mexico Voices for Children we’re working hard to create a different future for our children. Your support has been critical to that work and we thank you. Together, we can give New Mexico’s most vulnerable children something they are in grave danger of never having—a chance to succeed.



Children’s Charter

Our Vision for the Next Generation

- All children and their families have a high-quality cradle-to-career system of care and education.
- All children and their families have quality health care and supportive health programs.
- All children and their families are economically secure.
- All children and their families’ needs are a high priority in local, state, and federal budgets and benefit from a tax system that is fair, transparent, and that generates sufficient revenues.
- All children and their families are free from discrimination based on race, ethnicity, religion, disability, gender, sexual orientation, gender identity, or country of origin.
- All children and their families live in safe and supportive communities.
- All children and their families’ interests and needs are adequately represented in all levels of government through effective civic participation and protection of voters’ rights.

The Year in Review

Our 2013 fiscal year ran from July 1, 2012 through June 30, 2013

Our fiscal year 2013 marked the first year in residence for Executive Director Veronica C. García, Ed.D. One of Dr. García's projects early in her tenure was a staff-driven overhaul of the organization's strategic plan, Children's Charter, and core messages. One result of this work was a stream-lined priority policy agenda that distilled our work into five main areas: Tax Fairness and Budget Adequacy; Economic Security and Prosperity; Education and Early Learning/Care; Healthy and Safe Communities; and Racial/Ethnic Equity and Civic Participation.

These primary issue areas are inextricably linked. Policy work on tax fairness and budget adequacy is necessary to ensure that the state budget can fund crucial

services like education and health care for New Mexico children and families. Positive health outcomes and a well-educated citizenry fundamentally contribute to family economic security and long-term economic prosperity for the state and for New Mexico families. Because we all do better when we all do better, policies that advance racial equity and protect civil and human rights for all people also contribute to economic strength and enhance the quality of life for all New Mexicans.

We will look at each area in reviewing our policy work of fiscal year 2013, as well as touch on other important initiatives and events.

Tax Fairness and Budget Adequacy

A good portion of the work we do revolves around state tax and budget policy. We are part of several national networks that bring together similar advocacy groups doing fiscal policy work in other states—the State Fiscal Analysis Initiative (SFAI), the Economic Analysis and Research Network (EARN), and the Working Poor Families Project (WFPF). Each of these networks is headed by a national organization with staff experts in the economy, tax and budget policies, labor issues, and best practices in advocacy and communications. The state affiliates share ideas and assistance with each other as well. In turn, we make the data and policy analysis available to the New Mexico organizations with which we partner.

We often find ourselves playing defense when it comes to tax policy, because the factions that favor lower taxes (and less state spending) are well funded to make their case. One of the issues we fought this year was the introduction of the single sales factor formula. Essentially, when enacted, this formula would allow multi-state corporate manufacturers to dramatically lower their state tax bill. We made our case against this

Tax Fairness and Budget Adequacy

We believe in fair, responsible, and transparent tax and budget policies that generate sufficient revenues to fund vital programs. We also believe that children and families should be a high priority in federal, state and local budgets, as should essential services and functions such as education, health care, public safety, and infrastructure development.

We advocate for:

- Adequate budgets for health, education, public safety, and capital/infrastructure improvement programs.
- Tax policies and essential government programs that directly benefit low- and middle-income New Mexicans and that reduce poverty.
- Transparency and accountability in tax policy, tax incentives, and throughout the budgeting process.
- Closing tax loopholes and requiring that all corporations pay their fair share of taxes.

policy in the report *Winners and Losers: The Single Sales Factor Formula in New Mexico*.

Unfortunately, the state Legislature did enact the single sales factor formula as part of an omnibus tax bill that was pushed through both chambers in the final minutes of the 2013 legislative session. This came as a surprise, since elements of the bill had already been defeated individually in committee meetings throughout the session. We released the policy brief *HB-641: Bad Bill, Flawed Process, Empty Promises* in response.

On the federal level, one of the biggest obstacles was sequestration—scheduled across-the-board cuts in federal spending. Since most news coverage focused on how this would impact defense spending in New Mexico, we released *Facing the Fiscal Cliff: How*

Non-Defense Sequestration Cuts will Impact New Mexico to draw attention to the impact of federal cuts on programs that serve children and families.

One of our qualified victories in the 2013 legislative session was the passage of legislation mandating an annual tax expenditure budget. This is an accounting of all the tax cuts—credits, deductions, and exemptions—the state hands out every year. Besides being necessary for transparency and accountability, a tax expenditure budget helps lawmakers determine how much revenue is forgone this way and whether these tax cuts are having the desired effect. It was a qualified victory because this was the third year tax expenditure budget legislation was passed—and the third year it was vetoed by the Governor.

Economic Security and Prosperity

Economic security and prosperity issues are greatly related to state tax and budget policies, because such policies impact the state's educational systems, labor laws, consumer protection, and the economy—all of which impact how well our families thrive economically. Increasing the minimum wage is one of the perennial issues we work on in this area. We advocate for a higher minimum wage for several reasons, including the fact

that some 20 percent of the state's children have at least one parent who would benefit. We released several reports on this issue: *Raising Albuquerque's Minimum Wage: Good for Workers, Good for the Economy*; *New Mexico's Wage Race to the Bottom: Raising and Indexing the State Minimum Wage to Break the Free Fall*; and *How Raising and Indexing the Minimum Wage has Impacted State Economies*.

Economic Security and Prosperity

We believe that long-term economic prosperity involves promoting economic and workforce development opportunities for all New Mexicans and supporting access to adequate wage and work supports for those in crisis and those who are unable to work.

We advocate for:

- Extending and increasing access to, and full funding wage and work-support programs such as unemployment insurance, adult education, TANF, and JTIP.
- Raising the minimum wage statewide and indexing it to keep pace with inflation.
- Consumer protection initiatives, especially those related to financial services.
- Increasing funding for programs serving homeless and/or low-income individuals and families.
- Evidence-based economic development strategies that are committed to job creation, educational improvement, and infrastructure investments.

As we usually do, we worked in coalition with several partners on this issue and we saw some victories. In 2012, Albuquerque voters overwhelmingly voted to increase the city's minimum wage to \$8.50 an hour and index it so that it keeps pace with inflation. The Bernalillo County Commission voted to follow suit not long after. During the 2013 legislative session, the Legislature raised the minimum wage state-

wide to \$8.50, but the bill did not survive the Governor's veto pen.

Other reports we released this year were *The Need to Strengthen New Mexico's Unemployment Insurance Trust Fund*, which looks at the need to protect unemployment benefits, and *The State of Working New Mexico*, which looks at employment levels, under- and unemployment, wages, and other issues in New Mexico since the onset of the Great Recession.

In addition to our own reports, we help our national partners disseminate their data and reports to the local news media, legislators, and our allies. Some of these reports included: *Pulling Apart*, which ranked New Mexico as having the highest income inequality in the nation; a Working Poor Families Project report showing New Mexico has the highest rate of working families that are low income; and *Who Pays?*, which shows that the New Mexicans earning the lowest incomes pay a much higher rate in state and local taxes than

those that earn the highest incomes. All three of these reports were quoted by legislators and others advocating for policies to improve economic security for New Mexico families.



Gerry Bradley (center), Senior Researcher and Policy Advisor, addresses the crowd at a rally to raise the minimum wage at the state Capitol.

Education and Early Learning/Care

As we have for the last several years, we continued to work with our partners on the **Invest in Kids Now!** campaign, which seeks to dramatically increase state funding for early childhood care and learning programs. As in years past, we advocated on behalf of investing a small percentage of the state's multi-billion-dollar Land Grant Permanent Fund in programs that serve children from birth to age five. High-quality early childhood programs are known to improve outcomes for children. During the 2013 session, this legislation was passed by the House, but died in a Senate committee. The Legislature did increase appropriations for early childhood programs quite significantly. Even so, the need continues to far out-pace the funding.

During the year, one of our national partners released two studies showing that New Mexico had made some of the largest cuts to per-pupil K-12 and higher education spending in the nation since the recession began. We found this data helpful when advocating for higher spending for all levels of education.

Education and Early Learning/Care

We believe that every family and individual should have access to an affordable, evidence-based, and high-quality cradle-to-career system of care and education. Investing in the early years and in the education continuum is the best way to ensure that New Mexicans have the best opportunities to succeed in school and throughout life.

We advocate for:

- Universal access to home visiting services for infants and toddlers, and increasing funding for child care assistance for low-income families.
- Improved quality and accountability in early childhood care and learning programs.
- Using a small percentage of the income produced by the Land Grant Permanent Fund as an adequate and sustainable funding source for early education programs.
- Evidence-based methods for closing the racial/ethnic achievement gap at all stages of education.
- Efforts to improve educational outcomes for homeless youth in the state.

Healthy and Safe Communities

With key provisions of the federal Affordable Care Act (ACA) coming on line during the fiscal year, we worked on one of the issues we felt would be most beneficial to New Mexico families and kids—the expansion of Medicaid to low-income adults. While children from low- and moderate-income families already qualify for Medicaid, an estimated 40,000 eligible children remain unenrolled. There are a variety of reasons for this, one of which has to do with parental insurance status. When parents have health insurance they are more likely to enroll their children and take them to the doctor. We knew that if New Mexico expanded Medicaid to low-income adults, thousands of children would also be enrolled.

In order to make the case for expanding Medicaid, we knew we had to counter the administration's pronouncements that the existing Medicaid program was already too costly. We did this by updating and re-releasing two of our previous reports—

The Economic Benefits of Health Care Reform in New Mexico and *The Tax Revenue Benefits of Health Care Reform in New Mexico*. These reports showed how the influx of federal funding that would come with Medicaid expansion would create jobs and economic stimulus, and how the new tax revenue from other provisions in the ACA would more than offset the extra Medicaid costs that would be incurred by the state. Early in January 2013, the Governor announced that New Mexico would expand Medicaid.

Healthy and Safe Communities

We believe that it is an ethical and moral imperative that all New Mexico children and families have access to a comprehensive and high-quality system of health and wellness resources. We also believe that all New Mexicans should live and thrive in safe and supportive communities.

We advocate for:

- Full implementation of the federal Affordable Care Act.
- Simplifying enrollment in and expanding access to public health programs (including Medicaid, CHIP, and SNAP) and wellness initiatives, especially in rural and low-income areas.
- Increased investments in out-of-school-time programs, community development, and community involvement.
- Efforts to enhance public safety, prevent child abuse, reduce the incidence of adverse childhood events, and promote adequate gun safety measures.



Above state Representative Rick Miera speaks during the press conference to release the national KIDS COUNT Data Book held during the first annual *New Mexico KIDS COUNT Conference*; **Below** Conference attendees listen to a presentation.



Racial/Ethnic Equity and Civic Participation

Racial and ethnic equity underlies all of our work because the disparities that have been created and are perpetuated by state and federal policies negatively impact children. This is of particular significance in New Mexico, where nearly three-quarters of our children are members of racial or ethnic minority groups. Given that—along with our high rate of child poverty—we believe that the state must address racial and ethnic disparities as part of its work to mitigate the impacts of poverty. If we do not, the future of the state is grim.

While we include data disaggregated by race/ethnicity in all our reports when available, we did release two reports that focus on race: a special KIDS COUNT report—*Native American Children and Families in New Mexico: Strengths and Challenges*—and a fiscal policy report—*Mind the Gap: Unemployment, Income, and Earnings for Hispanics and Non-Hispanic Whites In and Before the Great Recession*. We also had our voter education guide, *Vote for Kids!*, translated into Spanish.

Racial/Ethnic Equity and Civic Participation

We believe that our collective and individual needs and voices should be represented in government and that the recognition of human and civil rights of all persons and families should not be limited by race, ethnicity, religion, disability, gender, sexual orientation, gender identity, or country of origin.

We advocate for:

- Just and humane immigration reform.
- Policies that license all qualified drivers—regardless of immigration status—and ensure safeguards against abuses.
- Robust campaign finance reform that helps all citizens understand and have a voice in the election process.

We advocate against:

- Voter identification proposals and other voter suppression tactics.

KIDS COUNT

The KIDS COUNT program comprises another major portion of our work. As with our fiscal policy work, we belong to a national network of KIDS COUNT organizations across the country. We assist in disseminating the national KIDS COUNT Data Book, which is released annually in the summer, along with other reports from our funder. We also release an annual New Mexico KIDS COUNT Data Book and other smaller special reports. We released our 2012 KIDS COUNT Data Book on the first day of the 2013 legislative session. For the first time, we included information about where we placed in the national rankings in 2012—which had been 49th. As usual, we included data on various indicators of childhood well-being at the state and county levels and included some policy recommendations.

In fiscal year 2013 we began integrating our KIDS COUNT program more fully with our work on fiscal policy. To that end we held our first annual **New Mexico KIDS COUNT Conference**. The theme was **Third Grade Counts** and among the scheduled speakers was Ralph Smith from The Campaign for Grade-Level Reading. We held the conference on June 24—the day the 2013 national KIDS COUNT Data Book was released. As it happened, that was the day New Mexicans learned that their state was now ranked the lowest in the nation—50th—for child well-being. This became the backdrop for the important work we would pursue in fiscal year 2014.

Connecting Data to Action

In 2013 we held the last of our Connecting Data to Action workshops. Held in ten counties across the state, these workshops trained participants to use data on child well-being both for assessing the unmet needs in their communities and for advocating with their legislators for funding and programs to meet those needs. We found working in communities around the state to be both rewarding and effective and hope to do more such work in the future.

Bill Jordan (standing), Senior Policy Advisor/Governmental Relations, speaks about lobbying at the *Connecting Data to Action* workshop in Albuquerque's South Valley.



Special Events

On November 17, 2012, we celebrated our 25th anniversary as an organization. We presented the 2012 **Alice King Public Service Award** to U.S. Senators Jeff Bingaman and Pete Domenici for their support as our Honorary Founding Directors. We presented members of our Founding Board of Directors with the 2012 **Patty Jennings and Polly Arango Citizen Advocacy Award** for their dedication and hard work in bringing our organization into existence. We also honored all of our past executive directors.

While we usually make the **Amy Biehl Youth Spirit Awards** part of our annual gala, we did not want the youths they honor to be overshadowed by our quarter-century celebration. So we held the awards presentation during the luncheon portion of our New Mexico KIDS COUNT Conference.



Celia Yazmin Avila Hernandez (at the podium in photo on the left) and Saif Khalfan Almuhairbi (at the podium in above photo) give their remarks after receiving the *Amy Biehl Youth Spirit Award* while Board member Fred Harris (left), emcee Deanna Saucedo, and executive director Veronica Garcia look on.

25th Anniversary Gala



Top Left State Senate Majority Leader Michael Sanchez and his wife Lynn Sanchez enjoy the pre-event reception; **Below Right** Former NM Voices executive directors are honored for their service (l. to r.): Current Board member Bob McNeill, state Senator Jerry Ortiz y Pino, current Board Chair Joseph Maestas, Frances Varela, current Board Vice-Chair Debra Baca, Ona Porter, current Board member Andy Hsi, Eric Griego, and current executive director Veronica C. Garcia; **Below Left** Former U.S. Senator J Pete Domenici is honored with the *Alice King Public Service Award* for his support as an Honorary Founding Director (l. to r.): Attorney General Gary King (award presenter), Pete Domenici Jr. (accepting on his father's behalf), Joseph Maestas, and Veronica Garcia.

All photos by Jim Daniels





Top Left NM Voices Board member and former U.S. Senator Fred Harris; **Top Right** Former Lieutenant Governor Diane Denish and State Representative Stephanie Garcia-Richard; **Left** State Senator Tim Jennings and Daniel Manzano.

Right New Mexico Voices for Children staff (l. to r., front row): Kwaku Sraha, Christine Hollis, Amber Wallin, Sharon Kayne, Veronica Garcia, Myra Segal, Ron Valek, Juliet Yazzie, and Briget Trujillo; (back row): Nick Estes, Gerry Bradley, Brian Urban, Troy Martinez, Alicia Manzano, and Bill Jordan.



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Financial Report

June 30, 2013

Assets

Cash & Equivalents	\$56,978
Cash, temporarily restricted	\$593,777
Grants & Pledges Receivable	\$287,589
Other Receivables	\$0
Prepaid Expenses	\$19,301
Equipment	\$64,011
Endowment Fund Investments	\$13,017
Security Deposit	\$4,000
Total Assets	\$1,038,673

Liabilities

Accounts Payable	\$28,326
Accrued Payroll Taxes	\$22,747
Accrued Compensated Absences	\$29,836
Capital Lease, current maturities	\$13,656
Capital Lease less current maturities	\$29,407
Total Liabilities	\$123,972

Net Assets

Unrestricted	\$27,395
Temporarily unrestricted	\$874,071
Permanently unrestricted	\$13,235
Total Net Assets	\$914,710

Total Liabilities & Net Assets **\$1,038,673**

Revenue

Grants & Contracts	\$1,048,921
Contributions & Other Support	\$131,028
Change in Endowment Value	\$783
Interest	\$1,026
Realized loss on sale of investment	(\$446)
Other	\$5,029
In-Kind	\$37,046
Total Revenue	\$1,223,387

Expenses

Program Expenses	\$1,216,970
Management & General Expenses	\$100,189
Fundraising Expenses	\$67,331
Total Expenses	\$1,384,490

Net Assets, beginning of the year	\$1,075,804
Net Assets, end of the year	\$914,701
Change in Net Assets	(\$161,103)

Endowment

Endowment Net Assets, beginning of the year	\$12,234
Investment Income, net of fees	\$783
Endowment Net Assets, end of year	\$13,017

Output and Impact Metrics

Reports	14
Fact Sheets/Handouts	27
Press Releases/Statements	26
Op-eds/Letters to the Editor	21
Press Mentions	434*
New and Returning Website Visitors...	11,903

*Note: This is a conservative estimate and only includes specific mentions of "New Mexico Voices for Children" by print, online, and broadcast news outlets. While most print and broadcast outlets also post their stories online, this count does not include those mentions. It also does not include mentions of "KIDS COUNT" or non-specific references to us or our work (for example, a non-specific reference might be "advocates for raising the minimum wage"), as these are difficult to track.



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