



# *Community Action Agency*

*of Southern New Mexico*



## *2022 Annual Report*

Community Action Agency  
of Southern New Mexico - CAASN

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# About Community Action Agency

CAASNM is a 58-year-old New Mexico nonprofit that provides resources and programming to people facing adversity. The goal is to help increase their resiliency and overall family wellbeing. We do this through programs that build on family strengths, self-empowerment, and resilience. Among the many services CAA provides are youth entrepreneurship and development, nutrition programs for children, family financial programs, housing stability, and empowerment and advocacy. Each year, we work with approximately 10,000 families.

**CAASNM provided 594 households with rent and mortgage assistance and engaged in landlord and tenant mediations for 313 families to help avoid eviction.**

**14,030 individuals engaged with CAASNM reported improved financial well-being.**

## **Family Prosperity Cash Support**

Family Prosperity Cash Support is a collaboration between CAASNM, FYI Innovations Plus, and Jardín de los Niños who



launched a pilot in Hatch, NM providing direct cash support to 12 Hatch families. It evaluates the improvements the money had on their quality of life, education and employment. The Hatch effort was funded in part by the Community Foundation of Southern New Mexico

and W.K. Kellogg foundation. It is the first phase of a larger Family Prosperity demonstration project for Las Cruces, which will provide cash support to 150 Las Cruces families who are single care-givers with a child 16 or younger. More information about Family Prosperity can



be found at <https://www.caasnm.org/cash-support/>



## Our Pillars of Service

**CAASNM served over 4,500 children  
aged 0-13.**

### Bridging Resources

Helping to improve children's nutrition, exercise, safety and development

#### **Programs:**

- Child and Adult Food Care
- Healthy Kids Health Preschool
- Thriving Kids Home Visiting

### Bridging Resources

Connecting families to community resources and benefits that can increase family and financial stability

#### **Programs:**

- Thriving Families
- Housing Stability
- Benefit Solutions

### Community Connections

Collaboration between CAASNM and other independent organizations and programs in the community

#### **Programs:**

- Empowerment Congress of Doña Ana County
- Coats for Kids
- Childrens Reading Alliance
- Ngage New Mexico

### Family Financial Empowerment

Assistance for families to become more self-reliant by providing programs and services that allow them to improve their quality of life

#### **Programs:**

- Kids Can Youth Entrepreneur Program
- Family Prosperity Program
- Individual Development Accounts
- Small Business Development

### Family Wellness

**C**ommunity Action Agency empowers and uplifts Southern New Mexicans through programs that build individual and family strength and resilience.

Its board-approved mission is to partner with New Mexicans to overcome adversity by connecting communities, encouraging family wellness, empowering families and bridging resources—CAASNM's four pillars of service in the community.

The overall vision of CAASNM is to see Southern New Mexicans live in thriving, equitable communities.



## Our Programs



### **Thriving Kids Anthony Space**

Thriving Kids helps over 300 families with children 0-5 improve their parenting skills and overall health and wellness and is directed by CAASNM team member Julie Ballard-Soto. The program, based in Anthony, has new space, thanks to the efforts of State Representatives Doreen Gallegos, Ray Lara, and Anthony City Mayor Diana Murillo. Ray Lara is also a CAASNM board member. The new space takes over what was



formerly a charter school and is well adapted to serving the Thriving Kids home visitors.



**Over 1,878 families improved their parenting skills.**

**Some 345 families with children ages 0-5 were mentored by Thriving Kids Home Visiting.**



## Youth Entrepreneurship & Leadership



A highlight of the CAASNM Kids Can Youth Entrepreneur program was the large-scale, public “Around the World” Business Fair and Contest held outdoors on the Plaza

de Las Cruces on December 3. Over a hundred youth at 70 booths sold products from their micro-businesses and participated in a contest based on such factors as marketing and public presentation.

The Kids Can Youth Entrepreneur Program is a successful CAASNM initiative founded by CAASNM team



member April Christensen which teaches youth 5-17, many of whom are disconnected, valuable business and life skills as they create a business idea of their own personal design. This year, some 300 kids are participating. The Paso del Norte Health Foundation has been a major supporter of Kids Can since being incorporated at CAASNM in 2019.

**578 children participated in before or after school activities, including the Kids Can Youth Entrepreneur Program, learning valuable business and life skills.**



## Youth Development Programs

DescolonizARTE is an Empowerment Congress of Doña Ana County program that gives youth—especially colonia youth—a space where they can feel safe to hold conversations and think critically about social issues. They equip the youth in marginalized communities to organize, lead and empower their youth peers through community art projects, such as large-scale murals.





## Farm-to-Preschool Program

A new initiative for CAASNM's Healthy Kids Healthy Preschools program, directed by CAASNM team member Alberto Zavala, has been the rollout of a new Farm to Preschool Program. Child development centers are buying New Mexico-grown produce for meals and snacks and using it for nutrition education activities. Young children are growing edible gardens and consuming these meals and snacks in the classroom.



*The Healthy Kids Healthy Preschool program worked with 43 centers this year!*



## Child and Adult Food Care Program

The Child and Adult Food Care Program (CACFP) is part of CAA Family Wellness programs that work with families, home childcare providers and licensed childcare centers to improve access to healthy, nutritious meals for children and train providers on topics of nutrition, exercise, safety, and child development



## Healthy Kids Healthy Preschool Program

The Healthy Kids Healthy Preschool Program works with some 43 child development centers and HeadStart programs State-wide to instill healthy eating and healthy living practices. It reached some 2,200 children up to 5 years old this year.

## New Albuquerque office for CACFP

CAASNM has a new Albuquerque presence through the expansion of support for the Child and Adult Food Care Program, which provides nutritious meals to children enrolled in daycare settings in 6 central New Mexico counties. The office, located at 2727 San Pedro Suite 113, houses new CAASNM staff members Amy Bazan, Doris Dimas, Nancy Frias, and Michelle Sierra. Said Amy Bazan, "I am so thankful to be part of an agency that has a culture of service at its heart!"



## Coats for Kids

Now in its 29th year, Coats for Kids benefited 2,700 children with warm winter coats. The program is community-based, including involvement from the Knights of Columbus, D2 Designs, and BravoMic communications.

CAASNM staff members ensuring the program's success include Lljaira Jimenez and Elda Cordero, as well as community member Alycia Carillo from D2 Designs.



**Coats for Kids has been an active program in the community for 29 years, distributing over 2,290 warm winter coats to children newborn to fifth grade this year.**



## Housing Stability Program

A major new grant has created a Housing Stability Program at CAASNM. CAASNM housing "navigator" staff work with families facing eviction or other housing needs in Otero, Grant, Luna, Hidalgo and Sierra Counties. Note: no services are provided in Dona Ana County and the program does not provide rent or utility assistance; only referrals to other programs.

*Note: The program does not provide funding for rent or utilities*

## A Success Story

Alana is a 24-year-old single mother of a 4-year-old also caring for a disabled mother. She lives in Deming, Luna County, but is facing eviction due to the high cost of her housing. Worse, her family feels unsafe due to continual verbal abuse and harassment.

Alana contacted the CAASNM offices where she was referred to housing stability team member Cece Alexander. Cece started to explore alternate options in Deming, which is a tight housing market. She interviewed previous landlords that she had worked with on the program, until finding one with a 2+ bedroom lower-rent apartment. Cece also worked to reassure the landlord about Alana and facilitated their meeting.

Finally, Alana was able to sign a lease and move in, with help finding furnishings.



# Board Members & Staff

## 2022 Board Members

Mark Pickett, Chair  
Danielle Guerrero, Vice  
Chair  
Ray Lara, Treasurer/  
Secretary  
Neomi O. Parra

Sara Myers  
Dr. Magdalena Manzanarez  
Dr. Nancy J. Sipes  
Maria Zuniga  
Abeer Al-Ghawi  
Jennifer Alvarado

## Dawn Z. Hommer, MBA, CCAP, CEO



Chief Executive Officer since 2011 and is a Certified Community Action Professional. She serves on Community boards and advisory groups including as Chair for the New Mexico Association of Community Partners, Vice President for Region VI Community Action Partnership, CAPLAW, Federal

Reserve Bank of Dallas Business and Community Advisory Council and NM Thrives Advisory team.

## Staff Spotlight

Marcus Crawford is the Operations Manager at CAASN. His responsibilities include providing logistical support to both the CEO and the agency's program directors, as well as marketing and organizing events. Marcus is also responsible for managing the agency's Board



of Directors and is a Nationally Certified ROMA Trainer (NCRT). In his free time, Marcus enjoys working out and playing video games.





*Teamwork makes the dreamwork!*



*Laughter is the best medicine!*



*CAASNM Employed 58 people in 2022!*





## 2022 Budget

2022 Revenue \$5,435,503

2022 number of employees = 58

**Program services are 89% of CAASNM's total expenses.**

**CAASNM helped 411 families start their own business, and 817 individuals entered into a job training program.**

## 2022 Funders



Community Services Block Grant · State of New Mexico · State of New Mexico Early Child Education and Care Department · State of New Mexico Department of Health · Child and Adult Food Care Program · Community Foundation of Southern New Mexico · Carl C. Anderson Jr. And Marie Jo Anderson Foundation · W.K. Kellogg Foundation · New Mexico Community Trust · Better Together New Mexico · City of Las Cruces · Maternal Infant Early Child Home Visiting · Kindle Foundation · Better Together New Mexico · First American Bank · New Mexico Community Trust · Groundswell Fund Integrated Voter Engagement · Las Cruces Public Schools · New Mexico Counts! 2020 · Nusenda Federal Credit Union · Paso del Norte Health Foundation · Prosperity Now · United Way of Southwestern New Mexico · Verizon Foundation · Walmart Foundation · Workforce Equity Initiative · Knights of Columbus



Every year, CAASNM depends on the generous contributions of friends in the community. Gifts of every size are welcome and can be made on line at [caasnm.org](http://caasnm.org) or sent to the main office. In addition, you may include CAASNM in your estate plans. For further information, please contact Mark Hohnstreiter, Development Officer, at 575 202 7500.



## Funder spotlight

For the second year, the Carl C. Anderson Jr. and Marie Jo Anderson Foundation of Austin Texas has awarded challenge grants to CAASNM. CAASNM quickly matched them, through the support of its good friends in the community. Funds have helped support Coats for Kids, Kids Can Youth Entrepreneur Program, and CAASNM overall.



**CARL C. ANDERSON SR.  
& MARIE JO ANDERSON**

*Charitable Foundation*

*Thank You!*